



THE SATCHEL SHAKESPEARE

# KING RICHARD II

EDITED BY

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## GENERAL PREFACE

The first step in the study of Shakespeare is to read what he wrote, not what has been written about him. This is an obvious truth; but its obviousness has not prevented it from being overlooked. The reading of notes and commentaries should follow, not precede, the perusal of the plays which they are intended to illuminate.

In this edition, each play is introduced merely by a brief note on its date and its position in the sequence of Shakespeare's writings. This rings up the curtain for the play itself, which should be read rapidly and imaginatively, with no pausing over difficulties. Some unfamiliar words and allusions are, however, explained in footnotes, which make a glossary unnecessary and clear up superficial obstacles without delay. An endeavour has been made to keep these notes as brief as possible.

The text of the play is followed by a series of what may be regarded either as long notes or as short essays. Such notes gain in value when read as a postscript, not as an introduction to the play. They comprise a sketch of Shakespeare's Life and Works; a note on Shakespeare's Theatre; a discussion of the date of the play in question, and of the books which inspired or helped Shakespeare to write it; and some general remarks about it. A few selected Questions conclude the volume, and stimulate the reader to think about what he has read.



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## PRELIMINARY NOTE

*The Life and Death of King Richard the Second*, to give the play its full title, was written in 1595, when Shakespeare was thirty-one years of age. It was written soon before or soon after *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, and resembles those two plays in being more lyrical in its style than any of the other plays. It is the first of a series of four plays on English history, the other members of the series being the two parts of *Henry IV*, and *Henry V*; and it breaks away entirely from the style and manner of treatment of Shakespeare's earlier historical plays, the three parts of *Henry VI*, and *Richard III*. *Richard II* was the first of Shakespeare's plays to be printed (quarto, 1597), and it must have been as popular with readers as it was with spectators, for it was reprinted four times before its inclusion in the collected edition of Shakespeare's plays (1623) which was edited by two of his fellow-actors, and which is known as the First Folio.



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

KING RICHARD the Second.

JOHN OF GAUNT, Duke of Lancaster, }  
EDMUND OF LANGLEY, Duke of York, } uncles to the King.

HENRY, surnamed BOLINGBROKE, Duke of Hereford, son to John of Gaunt; afterwards KING HENRY IV.

DUKE OF AUMERLE, son to the Duke of York.

THOMAS MOWBRAY, Duke of Norfolk.

DUKE OF SURREY.

EARL OF SALISBURY.

LORD BERKELEY.

BUSHY, }  
GREEN, } servants to King Richard.  
BAGOT, }

EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

HENRY PERCY, surnamed Hotspur, his son.

LORD ROSS.

LORD WILLOUGHBY.

LORD FITZWATER.

Bishop of Carlisle.

Abbot of Westminster.

SIR STEPHEN SCROOP.

SIR PIERCE of Exton.

Lord Marshal.

Captain of a band of Welshmen.

QUEEN to King Richard.

DUCHESS OF YORK.

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER.

Lady attending on the Queen.

Lords, Heralds, Officers, Soldiers, two Gardeners, Keeper,  
Messenger, Groom, and other Attendants

SCENE: *England and Wales*

# King Richard II

## ACT I

SCENE I. *London.* KING RICHARD'S *palace*

*Enter* KING RICHARD, JOHN OF GAUNT, *with other Nobles and Attendants*

*K. Rich.* Old John of Gaunt, time-honour'd Lancaster,  
Hast thou, according to thy oath and band,  
Brought hither Henry Hereford thy bold son,  
Here to make good the boisterous late appeal,  
Which then our leisure would not let us hear,  
Against the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray?

*Gaunt.* I have, my liege.

*K. Rich.* Tell me, moreover, hast thou sounded him  
If he appeal the duke on ancient malice;  
Or worthily, as a good subject should, 10  
On some known ground of treachery in him?

*Gaunt.* As near as I could sift him on that argument,  
On some apparent danger seen in him  
Aim'd at your highness, no inveterate malice.

*K. Rich.* Then call them to our presence; face to face,  
And frowning brow to brow, ourselves will hear  
The accuser and the accused freely speak:  
High-stomach'd are they both, and full of ire,  
In rage deaf as the sea, hasty as fire.

*Enter* BOLINGBROKE and MOWBRAY

*Boling.* Many years of happy days befall 20  
My gracious sovereign, my most loving liege!

18. *High-stomach'd, haughty.*

*Mow.* Each day still better other's happiness;  
Until the heavens, envying earth's good hap,  
Add an immortal title to your crown!

*K. Rich.* We thank you both: yet one but flatters us,  
As well appeareth by the cause you come;  
Namely, to appeal each other of high treason.  
Cousin of Hereford, what dost thou object  
Against the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray?

*Boling.* First, heaven be the record to my speech! 30  
In the devotion of a subject's love,  
Tendering the precious safety of my prince,  
And free from other misbegotten hate,  
Come I appellant to this princely presence.  
Now, Thomas Mowbray, do I turn to thee,  
And mark my greeting well; for what I speak  
My body shall make good upon this earth,  
Or my divine soul answer it in heaven.  
Thou art a traitor and a miscreant,  
Too good to be so and too bad to live, 40  
Since the more fair and crystal is the sky,  
The uglier seem' the clouds that in it fly.  
Once more, the more to aggravate the note,  
With a foul traitor's name stuff I thy throat;  
And wish, so please my sovereign, ere I move,  
What my tongue speaks my right drawn sword may  
prove.

*Mow.* Let not my cold words here accuse my zeal:  
'Tis not the trial of a woman's war,  
The bitter clamour of two eager tongues, 50  
Can arbitrate this cause betwixt us twain;  
The blood is hot that must be cool'd for this:  
Yet can I not of such tame patience boast  
As to be hush'd and nought at all to say:  
First, the fair reverence of your highness curbs me  
From giving reins and spurs to my free speech;  
Which else would post until it had return'd

43. *note*, stigma, brand. 49. *eager*, biting, acid.

56. *post*, hasten.

These terms of treason doubled down his throat.  
Setting aside his high blood's royalty,  
And let him be no kinsman to my liege,  
I do defy him, and I spit at him;  
Call him a slanderous coward and a villain:  
Which to maintain I would allow him odds,  
And meet him, were I tied to run afoot  
Even to the frozen ridges of the Alps,  
Or any other ground inhabitable,  
Where ever Englishman durst set his foot.  
Mean time let this defend my loyalty,  
By all my hopes, most falsely doth he lie.

60

*Boling.* Pale trembling coward, there I throw my gage,  
Disclaiming here the kindred of the king,  
And lay aside my high blood's royalty,  
Which fear, not reverence, makes thee to except.  
If guilty dread have left thee so much strength  
As to take up mine honour's pawn, then stoop:  
By that and all the rites of knighthood else,  
Will I make good against thee, arm to arm,  
What I have spoke, or thou canst worse devise.

70

*Mow.* I take it up; and by that sword I swear,  
Which gently laid my knighthood on my shoulder,  
I'll answer thee in any fair degree,  
Or chivalrous design of knightly trial:  
And when I mount, alive may I not light,  
If I be traitor or unjustly fight!

80

*K. Rich.* What doth our cousin lay to Mowbray's charge?

It must be great that can inherit us  
So much as of a thought of ill in him.

*Boling.* Look, what I speak, my life shall prove it true;  
That Mowbray hath received eight thousand nobles  
In name of lendings for your highness' soldiers,

63. *tied*, obliged, bound.      65. *inhabitable*, not habitable.

69. *gage*, pledge (usually a glove thrown on the ground) of a person's appearance to do battle in support of his assertions.

85. *inherit*, possess.

88. *nobles*. The noble was worth 20 groats, or 6s. 8d.

The which he hath detain'd for lewd employments, 90  
Like a false traitor and injurious villain.  
Besides I say and will in battle prove,  
Or here or elsewhere to the furthest verge  
That ever was survey'd by English eye,  
That all the treasons for these eighteen years  
Complotted and contrived in this land  
Fetch from false Mowbray their first head and spring.  
Further I say and further will maintain  
Upon his bad life to make all this good,  
That he did plot the Duke of Gloucester's death, 100  
Suggest his soon-believing adversaries,  
And consequently, like a traitor coward,  
Slued out his innocent soul through streams of blood:  
Which blood, like sacrificing Abel's, cries,  
Even from the tongueless caverns of the earth,  
To me for justice and rough chastisement;  
And, by the glorious worth of my descent,  
This arm shall do it, or this life be spent.

*K. Rich.* How high a pitch his resolution soars!  
Thomas of Norfolk, what say'st thou to this? 110

*Mow.* O, let my sovereign turn away his face  
And bid his ears a little while be deaf,  
Till I have told this slander of his blood,  
How God and good men hate so foul a liar.

*K. Rich.* Mowbray, impartial are our eyes and ears:  
Were he my brother, nay, my kingdom's heir,  
As he is but my father's brother's son,  
Now, by my sceptre's awe, I make a vow,  
Such neighbour nearness to our sacred blood  
Should nothing privilege him, nor partialize 120  
The unstooping firmness of my upright soul:  
He is our subject, Mowbray; so art thou:  
Free speech and fearless I to thee allow.

90. *lewd*, base, dishonourable. 101. *Suggest*, prompt, incite.

109. *pitch*, height; a technical term in falconry for the height to which a falcon soars before it stoops upon its prey.

113. *slander of his blood*, disgrace to his family.

*Mow.* Then, Bolingbroke, as low as to thy heart,  
Through the false passage of thy throat, thou liest.  
Three parts of that receipt I had for Calais  
Disbursed I duly to his highness' soldiers;  
The other part reserved I by consent,  
For that my sovereign liege was in my debt  
Upon remainder of a dear account, 130  
Since last I went to France to fetch his queen:  
Now swallow down that lie. For Gloucester's death,  
I slew him not; but to my own disgrace  
Neglected my sworn duty in that case.  
For you, my noble Lord of Lancaster,  
The honourable father to my foe,  
Once did I lay an ambush for your life,  
A trespass that doth vex my grieved soul;  
But ere I last received the sacrament  
I did confess it, and exactly begg'd 140  
Your Grace's pardon, and I hope I had it.  
This is my fault: as for the rest appeal'd,  
It issues from the rancour of a villain,  
A recreant and most degenerate traitor:  
Which in myself I boldly will defend;  
And interchangeably hurl down my gage  
Upon this overweening traitor's foot,  
To prove myself a loyal gentleman  
Even in the best blood chamber'd in his bosom.  
In haste whereof, most heartily I pray 150  
Your highness to assign our trial day.

*K. Rich.* Wrath-kindled gentlemen, be ruled by me;  
Let's purge this choler without letting blood:  
This we prescribe, though no physician;  
Deep malice makes too deep incision;  
Forget, forgive; conclude and be agreed;  
Our doctors say this is no month to bleed.  
Good uncle, let this end where it begun;  
We'll calm the Duke of Norfolk, you your son.

*Gaunt.* To be a make-peace shall become my age: 160

140. *exactly*, formally, in set terms.

Throw down, my son, the Duke of Norfolk's gage.

*K. Rich.* And, Norfolk, throw down his.

*Gaunt.* When, Harry, when?

Obedience bids I should not bid again.

*K. Rich.* Norfolk, throw down, we bid; there is no boot.

*Mow.* Myself I throw, dread sovereign, at thy foot.

My life thou shalt command, but not my shame:

The one my duty owes; but my fair name,

Despite of death that lives upon my grave,

To dark dishonour's use thou shalt not have.

I am disgraced, impeach'd and baffled here, 170

Pierced to the soul with slander's venom'd spear,

The which no balm can cure but his heart-blood

Which breathed this poison.

*K. Rich.* Rage must be withstood:

Give me his gage: lions make leopards tame.

*Mow.* Yea, but not change his spots: take but my shame,

And I resign my gage. My dear dear lord,

The purest treasure mortal times afford

Is spotless reputation: that away,

Men are but gilded loam or painted clay.

A jewel in a ten-times-barr'd-up chest 180

Is a bold spirit in a loyal breast.

Mine honour is my life; both grow in one;

Take honour from me, and my life is done:

Then, dear my liege, mine honour let me try;

In that I live and for that will I die.

*K. Rich.* Cousin, throw up your gage; do you begin.

*Boling.* O, God defend my soul from such deep sin!

Shall I seem crest-fall'n in my father's sight?

Or with pale beggar-fear impeach my height

Before this out-dared dastard? Ere my tongue 190

Shall wound my honour with such feeble wrong,

Or sound so base a parle, my teeth shall tear

164. *boot*, help. 170. *baffled*, disgraced.

192. *sound . . . a parle*, i.e. make overtures of peace.

The slavish motive of recanting fear,  
And spit it bleeding in his high disgrace,  
Where shame doth harbour, even in Mowbray's face.  
[*Exit Gaunt.*]

*K. Rich.* We were not born to sue, but to command;  
Which since we cannot do to make you friends,  
Be ready, as your lives shall answer it,  
At Coventry, upon Saint Lambert's day:  
There shall your swords and lances arbitrate 200  
The swelling difference of your settled hate:  
Since we can not atone you, we shall see  
Justice design the victor's chivalry.  
Marshal, command our officers at arms  
Be ready to direct these home alarms. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The DUKE OF LANCASTER's palace*

*Enter JOHN OF GAUNT with the DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER*

*Gaunt.* Alas, the part I had in Woodstock's blood  
Doth more solicit me than your exclaims,  
To stir against the butchers of his life!  
But since correction lieth in those hands  
Which made the fault that we cannot correct,  
Put we our quarrel to the will of heaven;  
Who, when they see the hours ripe on earth,  
Will rain hot vengeance on offenders' heads.

*Duch.* Finds brotherhood in thee no sharper spur?  
Hath love in thy old blood no living fire? 10  
Edward's seven sons, whereof thyself art one,  
Were as seven vials of his sacred blood,  
Or seven fair branches springing from one root:  
Some of those seven are dried by nature's course,  
Some of those branches by the Destinies cut;

199. *Saint Lambert's day*, 17th September, nearly five months ahead.

202. *atone*, reconcile.

203. *design*, point out, indicate.



But Thomas, my dear lord, my life, my Gloucester,  
One vial full of Edward's sacred blood,  
One flourishing branch of his most royal root,  
Is crack'd, and all the precious liquor spilt,  
Is hack'd down, and his summer leaves all faded, 20  
By envy's hand and murder's bloody axe.

Ah, Gaunt, his blood was thine!

That metal, that self mould, that fashion'd thee  
Made him a man; and though thou livest and breathest,  
Yet art thou slain in him: thou dost consent  
In some large measure to thy father's death,  
In that thou seest thy wretched brother die,  
Who was the model of thy father's life.

Call it not patience, Gaunt; it is despair:  
In suffering thus thy brother to be slaughter'd, 30  
Thou showest the naked pathway to thy life,  
Teaching stern murder how to butcher thee:  
That which in mean men we intitle patience  
Is pale cold cowardice in noble breasts.

What shall I say? to safeguard thine own life,  
The best way is to venge my Gloucester's death.

*Gaunt.* God's is the quarrel; for God's substitute,  
His deputy anointed in His sight,  
Hath caused his death: the which if wrongfully,  
Let heaven revenge; for I may never lift 40  
An angry arm against His minister.

*Duch.* Where then, alas, may I complain myself?

*Gaunt.* To God, the widow's champion and defence.

*Duch.* Why, then, I will. Farewell, old Gaunt.  
Thou goest to Coventry, there to behold  
Our cousin Hereford and fell Mowbray fight;  
O, sit my husband's wrongs on Hereford's spear,  
That it may enter butcher Mowbray's breast!  
Or, if misfortune miss the first career,  
Be Mowbray's sins so heavy in his bosom, 50  
That they may break his foaming courser's back,  
And throw the rider headlong in the lists,

A caitiff recreant to my cousin Hereford!  
Farewell, old Gaunt: thy sometimes brother's wife  
With her companion grief must end her life.

*Gaunt.* Sister, farewell; I must to Coventry:  
As much good stay with thee as go with me!

*Duch.* Yet one word more: grief boundeth where it  
falls,

Not with the empty hollowness, but weight:  
I take my leave before I have begun, 60  
For sorrow ends not when it seemeth done.  
Commend me to thy brother, Edmund York.  
Lo, this is all:—nay, yet depart not so;  
Though this be all, do not so quickly go;  
I shall remember more. Bid him—ah, what?—  
With all good speed at Plashy visit me.  
Alack, and what shall good old York there see  
But empty lodgings and unfurnish'd walls,  
Unpeopled offices, untrodden stones?  
And what hear there for welcome but my groans? 70  
Therefore commend me; let him not come there,  
To seek out sorrow that dwells every where.  
Desolate, desolate, will I hence and die:  
The last leave of thee takes my weeping eye. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The lists at Coventry*

*Enter the Lord Marshal and the DUKE OF AUMERLE*

*Mar.* My Lord Aumerle, is Harry Hereford arm'd?

*Aum.* Yea, at all points; and longs to enter in.

*Mar.* The Duke of Norfolk, sprightly and bold,  
Stays but the summons of the appellant's trumpet.

*Aum.* Why, then, the champions are prepared, and  
stay  
For nothing but his majesty's approach.

66. *Plashy*, near Dunmow in Essex, where Gloucester had a seat,  
in virtue of his office as High Constable.

*The trumpets sound, and the KING enters with his nobles, GAUNT, BUSHY, BAGOT, GREEN, and others. When they are set, enter MOWBRAY in arms, defendant, with a Herald.*

*K. Rich.* Marshal, demand of yonder champion  
The cause of his arrival here in arms:  
Ask him his name and orderly proceed  
To swear him in the justice of his cause. 10

*Mar.* In God's name, and the king's, say who thou art  
And why thou comest thus knightly clad in arms,  
Against what man thou comest, and what thy quarrel:  
Speak truly, on thy knighthood and thy oath;  
As so defend thee heaven and thy valour!

*Mow.* My name is Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk,  
Who hither come engaged by my oath—  
Which God defend a knight should violate!—  
Both to defend my loyalty and truth  
To God, my king and his succeeding issue, 20  
Against the Duke of Hereford that appeals me;  
And, by the grace of God and this mine arm,  
To prove him, in defending of myself,  
A traitor to my God, my king, and me:  
And as I truly fight, defend me heaven!

*The trumpets sound. Enter BOLINGBROKE, appellant, in armour, with a Herald*

*K. Rich.* Marshal, ask yonder knight in arms,  
Both who he is and why he cometh hither  
Thus plated in habiliments of war,  
And formally, according to our law,  
Depose him in the justice of his cause. 30

*Mar.* What is thy name? and wherefore comest thou  
hither,  
Before King Richard in his royal lists?

18. *defend*, forbid. 21. *appeals*, impeaches.

30. *Depose him*, take his solemn deposition.

Against whom comest thou? and what's thy quarrel?  
Speak like a true knight, so defend thee heaven!

*Boling.* Harry of Hereford, Lancaster, and Derby  
Am I; who ready here do stand in arms,  
To prove, by God's grace and my body's valour,  
In lists, on Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk,  
That he is a traitor, foul and dangerous,  
To God of heaven, King Richard and to me; 40  
And as I truly fight, defend me heaven!

*Mar.* On pain of death, no person be so bold  
Or daring-hardy as to touch the lists,  
Except the marshal and such officers  
Appointed to direct these fair designs.

*Boling.* Lord marshal, let me kiss my sovereign's hand,  
And bow my knee before his majesty:  
For Mowbray and myself are like two men  
That vow a long and weary pilgrimage;  
Then let us take a ceremonious leave 50  
And loving farewell of our several friends.

*Mar.* The appellant in all duty greets your highness,  
And craves to kiss your hand and take his leave.

*K. Rich.* We will descend and fold him in our arms.  
Cousin of Hereford, as thy cause is right,  
So be thy fortune in this royal fight!  
Farewell, my blood; which if to-day thou shed,  
Lament we may, but not revenge thee dead.

*Boling.* O, let no noble eye profane a tear  
For me, if I be gored with Mowbray's spear: 60  
As confident as is the falcon's flight  
Against a bird, do I with Mowbray fight.  
My loving lord, I take my leave of you;  
Of you, my noble cousin, Lord Aumerle;  
Not sick, although I have to do with death,  
But lusty, young, and cheerly drawing breath.  
Lo, as at English feasts, so I regret  
The daintiest last, to make the end most sweet:  
O thou, the earthly author of my blood,  
Whose youthful spirit, in me regenerate, 70

Doth with a twofold vigour lift me up  
 To reach at victory above my head,  
 Add proof unto mine armour with thy prayers;  
 And with thy blessings steel my lance's point,  
 That it may enter Mowbray's waxen coat,  
 And furbish new the name of John a Gaunt,  
 Even in the lusty haviour of his son.

*Gaunt.* God in thy good cause make thee prosperous!  
 Be swift like lightning in the execution;  
 And let thy blows, doubly redoubled, 80  
 Fall like amazing thunder on the casque  
 Of thy adverse pernicious enemy:  
 Rouse up thy youthful blood, be valiant and live.

*Boling.* Mine innocency and Saint George to thrive!

*Mow.* However God or fortune cast my lot,  
 There lives or dies, true to King Richard's throne,  
 A loyal, just and upright gentleman:  
 Never did captive with a freer heart  
 Cast off his chains of bondage and embrace  
 His golden uncontroll'd enfranchisement, 90  
 More than my dancing soul doth celebrate  
 This feast of battle with mine adversary.  
 Most mighty liege, and my companion peers,  
 Take from my mouth the wish of happy years:  
 As gentle and as jocund as to jest  
 Go I to fight: truth hath a quiet breast.

*K. Rich.* Farewell, my lord: securely I espy  
 Virtue with valour couched in thine eye.  
 Order the trial, marshal, and begin.

*Mar.* Harry of Hereford, Lancaster, and Derby, 100  
 Receive thy lance, and God defend the right!

*Boling.* Strong as a tower in hope, I cry amen.

*Mar.* Go bear this lance to Thomas, Duke of Norfolk.

*First Her.* Harry of Hereford, Lancaster, and Derby,  
 Stands here for God, his sovereign and himself,  
 On pain to be found false and recreant,  
 To prove the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray,

73. *proof*, impenetrability.

81. *casque*, helmet.

A traitor to his God, his king and him;  
And dares him to set forward to the fight.

*Sec. Her.* Here standeth Thomas Mowbray, Duke of  
Norfolk, 110

On pain to be found false and recreant,  
Both to defend himself and to approve  
Henry of Hereford, Lancaster, and Derby,  
To God, his sovereign and to him disloyal;  
Courageously and with a free desire  
Attending but the signal to begin.

*Mar.* Sound, trumpets; and set forward, combatants.  
[*A charge sounded.*]

Stay, the king hath thrown his warder down.

*K. Rich.* Let them lay by their helmets and their spears,  
And both return back to their chairs again: 120  
Withdraw with us: and let the trumpets sound  
While we return these dukes what we decree.

[*A long flourish.*]

Draw near,  
And list what with our council we have done.  
For that our kingdom's earth should not be soil'd  
With that dear blood which it hath fostered;  
And for our eyes do hate the dire aspect  
Of civil wounds plough'd up with neighbours' sword;  
And for we think the eagle-winged pride  
Of sky-aspiring and ambitious thoughts, 130  
With rival-hating envy, set on you  
To wake our peace, which in our country's cradle  
Draws the sweet infant breath of gentle sleep;  
Which so roused up with boisterous untuned drums,  
With harsh-resounding trumpets' dreadful bray,  
And grating shock of wrathful iron arms,  
Might from our quiet confines fright fair peace  
And make us wade even in our kindred's blood;  
Therefore, we banish you our territories:

118. *warder*, staff or mace held by one presiding over a combat.

122 (stage direction). *A long flourish.* Actually, the king and his council deliberated on the matter for two hours.

You, cousin Hereford, upon pain of life, 140  
Till twice five summers have enrich'd our fields  
Shall not regret our fair dominions,  
But tread the stranger paths of banishment.

*Boling.* Your will be done: this must my comfort be,  
That sun that warms you here shall shine on me;  
And those his golden beams to you here lent  
Shall point on me and gild my banishment.

*K. Rich.* Norfolk, for thee remains a heavier doom,  
Which I with some unwillingness pronounce:  
The sly slow hours shall not determinate 150  
The dateless limit of thy dear exile;  
The hopeless word of 'never to return'  
Breathe I against thee, upon pain of life.

*Mow.* A heavy sentence, my most sovereign liege,  
And all unlook'd for from your highness' mouth:  
A dearer merit, not so deep a maim  
As to be cast forth in the common air,  
Have I deserved at your highness' hands.  
The language I have learn'd these forty years,  
My native English, now I must forego: 160  
And now my tongue's use is to me no more  
Than an unstringed viol or a harp,  
Or like a cunning instrument cased up,  
Or, being open, put into his hands  
That knows no touch to tune the harmony:  
Within my mouth you have engaol'd my tongue,  
Doubly portcullis'd with my teeth and lips;  
And dull unfeeling barren ignorance  
Is made my gaoler to attend on me.  
I am too old to fawn upon a nurse, 170  
Too far in years to be a pupil now:

What is thy sentence then but speechless death,  
Which robs my tongue from breathing native breath?

*K. Rich.* It boots thee not to be compassionate:  
After our sentence plaining comes too late.

*Mow.* Then thus I turn me from my country's light,

174. *compassionate*, full of self-pity.

To dwell in solemn shades of endless night.

*K. Rich.* Return again, and take an oath with thee.

Lay on our royal sword your banish'd hands;

Swear by the duty that you owe to God— 180

Our part therein we banish with yourselves—

To keep the oath that we administer:

You never shall, so help you truth and God!

Embrace each other's love in banishment;

Nor never look upon each other's face;

Nor never write, regret, nor reconcile

This louring tempest of your home-bred hate;

Nor never by advised purpose meet

To plot, contrive, or complot any ill

'Gainst us, our state, our subjects, or our land. 190

*Boling.* I swear.

*Mow.* And I, to keep all this.

*Boling.* Norfolk, so far as to mine enemy:—

By this time, had the king permitted us,

One of our souls had wander'd in the air,

Banish'd this frail sepulchre of our flesh,

As now our flesh is banish'd from this land:

Confess thy treasons ere thou fly the realm:

Since thou hast far to go, bear not along

The clogging burthen of a guilty soul. 200

*Mow.* No, Bolingbroke: if ever I were traitor,

My name be blotted from the book of life,

And I from heaven banish'd as from hence!

But what thou art, God, thou, and I do know;

And all too soon, I fear, the king shall rue.

Farewell, my liege. Now no way can I stray;

Save back to England, all the world's my way. [*Exit.*]

*K. Rich.* Uncle, even in the glasses of thine eyes

I see thy grieved heart: thy sad aspect

Hath from the number of his banish'd years 210

Pluck'd four away. [*To Boling.*] Six frozen winters spent,

Return with welcome home from banishment.

211. The remission of the four years actually occurred some weeks later, when Bolingbroke took leave of the king at Eltham.



*Boling.* How long a time lies in one little word!  
Four lagging winters and four wanton springs  
End in a word: such is the breath of kings.

*Gaunt.* I thank my liege, that in regard of me  
He shortens four years of my son's exile:  
But little vantage shall I reap thereby;  
For, ere the six years that he hath to spend  
Can change their moons and bring their times about, 220  
My oil-dried lamp and time-bewasted light  
Shall be extinct with age and endless night;  
My inch of taper will be burnt and done,  
And blindfold death not let me see my son.

*K. Rich.* Why, uncle, thou hast many years to live.

*Gaunt.* But not a minute, king, that thou canst give:  
Shorten my days thou canst with sullen sorrow,  
And pluck nights from me, but not lend a morrow;  
Thou canst help time to furrow me with age,  
But stop no wrinkle in his pilgrimage; 230  
Thy word is current with him for my death,  
But dead, thy kingdom cannot buy my breath.

*K. Rich.* Thy son is banish'd upon good advice,  
Whereto thy tongue a party-verdict gave:  
Why at our justice seem'st thou then to lour?

*Gaunt.* Things sweet to taste prove in digestion sour.  
You urged me as a judge; but I had rather  
You would have bid me argue like a father.  
O, had it been a stranger, not my child,  
To smooth his fault I should have been more mild: 240  
A partial slander sought I to avoid,  
And in the sentence my own life destroy'd.  
Alas, I look'd when some of you should say,  
I was too strict to make mine own away;  
But you gave leave to my unwilling tongue  
Against my will to do myself this wrong.

*K. Rich.* Cousin, farewell; and, uncle, bid him so:  
Six years we banish him, and he shall go.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt King Richard and train.*

241. *A partial slander*, the ill-reputation of being unfair.

*Aum.* Cousin, farewell: what presence must not know,  
From where you do remain let paper show. 250

*Mar.* My lord, no leave take I; for I will ride,  
As far as land will let me, by your side.

*Gaunt.* O, to what purpose dost thou hoard thy words,  
That thou return'st no greeting to thy friends?

*Boling.* I have too few to take my leave of you,  
When the tongue's office should be prodigal  
To breathe the abundant dolour of the heart.

*Gaunt.* Thy grief is but thy absence for a time.

*Boling.* Joy absent, grief is present for that time.

*Gaunt.* What is six winters? they are quickly gone. 260

*Boling.* To men in joy; but grief makes one hour ten.

*Gaunt.* Call it a travel that thou takest for pleasure.

*Boling.* My heart will sigh when I miscall it so,  
Which finds it an inforced pilgrimage.

*Gaunt.* The sullen passage of thy weary steps  
Esteem as foil wherein thou art to set  
The precious jewel of thy home return.

*Boling.* Nay rather, every tedious stride I make  
Will but remember me what a deal of world  
I wander from the jewels that I love. 270

Must I not serve a long apprenticeship  
To foreign passages, and in the end,  
Having my freedom, boast of nothing else  
But that I was a journeyman to grief?

*Gaunt.* All places that the eye of heaven visits  
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.

Teach thy necessity to reason thus;

There is no virtue like necessity.

Think not the king did banish thee,

But thou the king. Woe doth the heavier sit, 280

Where it perceives it is but faintly borne.

Go, say I sent thee forth to purchase honour

And not the king exiled thee; or suppose

Devouring pestilence hangs in our air

And thou art flying to a fresher clime:

272. *foreign passages, wanderings abroad.*

Look, what thy soul holds dear, imagine it  
To lie that way thou go'st, not whence thou comest:  
Suppose the singing birds musicians,  
The grass whereon thou tread'st the presence strew'd,  
The flowers fair ladies, and thy steps no more 290  
Than a delightful measure or a dance;  
For gnarling sorrow hath less power to bite  
The man that mocks at it and sets it light.

*Boling.* O, who can hold a fire in his hand  
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?  
Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite  
By bare imagination of a feast?  
Or wallow naked in December snow  
By thinking on fantastic summer's heat?  
O, no! the apprehension of the good 300  
Gives but the greater feeling to the worse:  
Fell sorrow's tooth doth never rankle more  
Than when he bites, but lanceth not the sore.

*Gaunt.* Come, come, my son, I'll bring thee on thy way:  
Had I thy youth and cause, I would not stay.

*Boling.* Then, England's ground, farewell; sweet soil,  
adieu;  
My mother, and my nurse, that bears me yet!  
Where'er I wander, boast of this I can,  
Though banish'd, yet a trueborn Englishman. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV. *The court*

*Enter the KING, with BAGOT and GREEN at one door;  
and the DUKE OF AUMERLE at another*

*K. Rich.* We did observe. Cousin Aumerle,  
How far brought you high Hereford on his way?

*Aum.* I brought high Hereford, if you call him so,  
But to the next highway, and there I left him.

*K. Rich.* And say, what store of parting tears were shed?

289. *presence*, presence-chamber.

299. *fantastic*, imaginary.

*Aum.* Faith, none for me; except the north-east wind,  
Which then blew bitterly against our faces,  
Awaked the sleeping rheum, and so by chance  
Did grace our hollow parting with a tear.

*K. Rich.* What said our cousin when you parted with  
him? 10

*Aum.* 'Farewell':

And, for my heart disdained that my tongue  
Should so profane the word, that taught me craft  
To counterfeit oppression of such grief  
That words seem'd buried in my sorrow's grave.  
Marry, would the word 'farewell' have lengthen'd hours  
And added years to his short banishment,  
He should have had a volume of farewells,  
But since it would not, he had none of me.

*K. Rich.* He is our cousin, cousin; but 'tis doubt, 20  
When time shall call him home from banishment,  
Whether our kinsman come to see his friends.  
Ourself and Bushy, Bagot here and Green  
Observed his courtship to the common people;  
How he did seem to dive into their hearts  
With humble and familiar courtesy,  
What reverence he did throw away on slaves,  
Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles  
And patient underbearing of his fortune,  
As 'twere to banish their affects with him. 30  
Off goes his bonnet to an oyster-wench;  
A brace of draymen bid God speed him well  
And had the tribute of his supple knee,  
With 'Thanks, my countrymen, my loving friends';  
As were our England in reversion his,  
And he our subjects' next degree in hope.

*Green.* Well, he is gone; and with him go these  
thoughts.

Now for the rebels which stand out in Ireland,  
Expedient manage must be made, my liege,

29. *underbearing*, enduring.

39. *Expedient manage*, speedy measures of control.

Ere further leisure yield them further means 40  
For their advantage and your highness' loss.

*K. Rich.* We will ourself in person to this war:  
And, for our coffers, with too great a court  
And liberal largess, are grown somewhat light,  
We are inforced to farm our royal realm;  
The revenue whereof shall furnish us  
For our affairs in hand: if that come short,  
Our substitutes at home shall have blank charters;  
Whereto, when they shall know what men are rich,  
They shall subscribe them for large sums of gold 50  
And send them after to supply our wants;  
For we will make for Ireland presently.

*Enter BUSHY*

Bushy, what news?

*Bushy.* Old John of Gaunt is grievous sick, my lord,  
Suddenly taken; and hath sent post haste  
To entreat your majesty to visit him.

*K. Rich.* Where lies he?

*Bushy.* At Ely House.

*K. Rich.* Now put it, God, in the physician's mind  
To help him to his grave immediately! 60

The lining of his coffers shall make coats

To deck our soldiers for these Irish wars.

Come, gentlemen, let's all go visit him:

Pray God we may make haste, and come too late!

*All.* Amen.

[*Exeunt.*]

43. *for*, because. 50. *subscribe*, write their names under.

## ACT II

SCENE I. *Ely House*

*Enter JOHN OF GAUNT sick, with the DUKE OF YORK, &c.*

*Gaunt.* Will the king come, that I may breathe my last  
In wholesome counsel to his unstaïd youth?

*York.* Vex not yourself, nor strive not with your breath;  
For all in vain comes counsel to his ear.

*Gaunt.* O, but they say the tongues of dying men  
Enforce attention like deep harmony:  
Where words are scarce, they are seldom spent in vain,  
For they breathe truth that breathe their words in pain.  
He that no more must say is listen'd more

Than they whom youth and ease have taught to glose;  
More are men's ends mark'd than their lives before: 11

The setting sun, and music at the close,  
As the last taste of sweets, is sweetest last,  
Writ in remembrance more than things long past:  
Though Richard my life's counsel would not hear,  
My death's sad tale may yet undeaf his ear.

*York.* No; it is stopp'd with other flattering sounds,  
As praises, of whose taste the wise are fond,  
Lascivious metres, to whose venom sound  
The open ear of youth doth always listen; 20  
Report of fashions in proud Italy,  
Whose manners still our tardy apish nation  
Limps after in base imitation.

Where doth the world thrust forth a vanity—  
So it be new, there's no respect how vile—  
That is not quickly buzz'd into his ears?  
Then all too late comes counsel to be heard,

10. *glose*, speak insincerely.

Where will doth mutiny with wit's regard.  
Direct not him whose way himself will choose:  
'Tis breath thou lack'st, and that breath wilt thou lose. 30

*Gaunt.* Methinks I am a prophet new inspired  
And thus expiring do foretell of him:  
His rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last,  
For violent fires soon burn out themselves;  
Small showers last long, but sudden storms are short;  
He tires betimes that spurs too fast betimes;  
With eager feeding food doth choke the feeder:  
Light vanity, insatiate cormorant,  
Consuming means, soon preys upon itself.  
This royal throne of kings, this sceptr'd isle, 40  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
The other Eden, demi-paradise,  
This fortress built by Nature for herself  
Against infection and the hand of war,  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
Which serves it in the office of a wall  
Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
Against the envy of less happier lands,  
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England, 50  
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,  
Fear'd by their breed and famous by their birth,  
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,  
For Christian service and true chivalry,  
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry  
Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's Son,  
This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,  
Dear for her reputation through the world,  
Is now leased out, I die pronouncing it,  
Like to a tenement or pelting farm: 60  
England, bound in with the triumphant sea,  
Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege  
Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,  
With inky blots and rotten parchment bonds:

60. *pelting*, petty, paltry.

That England, that was wont to conquer others,  
Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.  
Ah, would the scandal vanish with my life,  
How happy then were my ensuing death!

*Enter* KING RICHARD *and* QUEEN, AUMERLE, BUSHY,  
GREEN, BAGOT, ROSS, *and* WILLOUGHBY

*York.* The king is come: deal mildly with his youth;  
For young hot colts being raged do rage the more. 70

*Queen.* How fares our noble uncle, Lancaster?

*K. Rich.* What comfort, man? how is't with aged  
Gaunt?

*Gaunt.* O, how that name befits my composition!  
Old Gaunt indeed, and gaunt in being old:  
Within me grief hath kept a tedious fast;  
And who abstains from meat that is not gaunt?  
For sleeping England long time have I watch'd;  
Watching breeds leanness, leanness is all gaunt:  
The pleasure that some fathers feed upon,  
Is my strict fast; I mean, my children's looks; 80  
And therein fasting, hast thou made me gaunt:  
Gaunt am I for the grave, gaunt as a grave,  
Whose hollow womb inherits nought but bones.

*K. Rich.* Can sick men play so nicely with their names?

*Gaunt.* No, misery makes sport to mock itself:  
Since thou dost seek to kill my name in me,  
I mock my name, great king, to flatter thee.

*K. Rich.* Should dying men flatter with those that live?

*Gaunt.* No, no, men living flatter those that die.

*K. Rich.* Thou, now a-dying, say'st thou flatterest me.

*Gaunt.* O, no! thou diest, though I the sicker be. 91

*K. Rich.* I am in health, I breathe, and see thee ill.

*Gaunt.* Now He that made me knows I see thee ill;  
Ill in myself to see, and in thee seeing ill.  
Thy death-bed is no lesser than thy land  
Wherein thou liest in reputation sick;  
And thou, too careless patient as thou art,

84. *nicely*, triflingly.



Commit'st thy anointed body to the cure  
 Of those physicians that first wounded thee:  
 A thousand flatterers sit within thy crown, 100  
 Whose compass is no bigger than thy head;  
 And yet, incaged in so small a verge,  
 The waste is no whit lesser than thy land.  
 O, had thy grandsire with a prophet's eye  
 Seen how his son's son should destroy his sons,  
 From forth thy reach he would have laid thy shame,  
 Deposing thee before thou wert possess'd,  
 Which art possess'd now to depose thyself.  
 Why, cousin, wert thou regent of the world,  
 It were a shame to let this land by lease; 110  
 But for thy world enjoying but this land,  
 Is it not more than shame to shame it so?  
 Landlord of England art thou now, not king:  
 Thy state of law is bondsman to the law;  
 And thou—

*K. Rich.* A lunatic lean-witted fool,  
 Presuming on an ague's privilege,  
 Darest with thy frozen admonition  
 Make pale our cheek, chasing the royal blood  
 With fury from his native residence.  
 Now, by my seat's right royal majesty, 120  
 Wert thou not brother to great Edward's son,  
 This tongue that runs so roundly in thy head  
 Should run thy head from thy unreverent shoulders.

*Gaunt.* O, spare me not, my brother Edward's son,  
 For that I was his father Edward's son;  
 That blood already, like the pelican,  
 Hast thou tapp'd out and drunkenly caroused:  
 My brother Gloucester, plain well-meaning soul,  
 Whom fair befall in heaven 'mongst happy souls!  
 May be a precedent and witness good 130  
 That thou respect'st not spilling Edward's blood:  
 Join with the present sickness that I have;  
 And thy unkindness be like crooked age,

122. *roundly*, unceremoniously.

To crop at once a too long wither'd flower.  
Live in thy shame, but die not shame with thee!  
These words hereafter thy tormentors be!  
Convey me to my bed, then to my grave:  
Love they to live that love and honour have.

*[Exit, borne off by his Attendants.]*

*K. Rich.* And let them die that age and sullens have;  
For both hast thou, and both become the grave. 140

*York.* I do beseech your majesty, impute his words  
To wayward sickliness and age in him:  
He loves you, on my life, and holds you dear  
As Harry Duke of Hereford, were he here.

*K. Rich.* Right, you say true: as Hereford's love, so  
his;  
As theirs, so mine; and all be as it is.

*Enter NORTHUMBERLAND*

*North.* My liege, old Gaunt commends him to your  
majesty.

*K. Rich.* What says he?

*North.* Nay, nothing: all is said:  
His tongue is now a stringless instrument;  
Words, life and all, old Lancaster hath spent. 150

*York.* Be York the next that must be bankrupt so!  
Though death be poor, it ends a mortal woe.

*K. Rich.* The ripest fruit first falls, and so doth he;  
His time is spent, our pilgrimage must be.  
So much for that. Now for our Irish wars:  
We must supplant those rough rug-headed kerns,  
Which live like venom where no venom else  
But only they have privilege to live.  
And for these great affairs do ask some charge,  
Towards our assistance we do seize to us 160  
The plate, coin, revenues and moveables,  
Whereof our uncle Gaunt did stand possess'd.

156. *rug-headed kerns*, shock-headed Irish infantry.

157. *no venom else*. St. Patrick was said to have banished snakes  
and toads from Ireland.

*York.* How long shall I be patient? ah, how long  
 Shall tender duty make me suffer wrong?  
 Not Gloucester's death, nor Hereford's banishment,  
 Not Gaunt's rebukes, nor England's private wrongs,  
 Nor the prevention of poor Bolingbroke  
 About his marriage, nor my own disgrace,  
 Have ever made me sour my patient cheek,  
 Or bend one wrinkle on my sovereign's face. 170  
 I am the last of noble Edward's sons,  
 Of whom thy father, Prince of Wales, was first:  
 In war was never lion raged more fierce,  
 In peace was never gentle lamb more mild,  
 Than was that young and princely gentleman.  
 His face thou hast, for even so look'd he,  
 Accomplish'd with the number of thy hours;  
 But when he frown'd, it was against the French  
 And not against his friends; his noble hand  
 Did win what he did spend and spent not that 180  
 Which his triumphant father's hand had won;  
 His hands were guilty of no kindred blood,  
 But bloody with the enemies of his kin.  
 O Richard! York is too far gone with grief,  
 Or else he never would compare between.

*K. Rich.* Why, uncle, what's the matter?

*York.*

O my liege,

Pardon me, if you please; if not, I, pleas'd  
 Not to be pardon'd, am content withal.  
 Seek you to seize and gripe into your hands  
 The royalties and rights of banish'd Hereford? 190  
 Is not Gaunt dead, and doth not Hereford live?  
 Was not Gaunt just, and is not Harry true?  
 Did not the one deserve to have an heir?  
 Is not his heir a well-deserving son?  
 Take Hereford's rights away, and take from Time  
 His charters and his customary rights;  
 Let not to-morrow then ensue to-day;  
 Be not thyself; for how art thou a king

190. *royalties*, prerogatives.

197. *ensue*, follow upon.

But by fair sequence and succession?  
Now, afore God—God forbid I say true!— 200  
If you do wrongfully seize Hereford's rights,  
Call in the letters patents that he hath  
By his attorneys-general to sue  
His livery, and deny his offer'd homage,  
You pluck a thousand dangers on your head,  
You lose a thousand well-disposed hearts  
And prick my tender patience to those thoughts  
Which honour and allegiance cannot think.

*K. Rich.* Think what you will, we seize into our hands  
His plate, his goods, his money and his lands. 210

*York.* I'll not be by the while: my liege, farewell:  
What will ensue hereof, there's none can tell;  
But by bad courses may be understood  
That their events can never fall out good. [*Exit.*]

*K. Rich.* Go, Bushy, to the Earl of Wiltshire straight:  
Bid him repair to us to Ely House  
To see this business. To-morrow next  
We will for Ireland; and 'tis time, I trow:  
And we create, in absence of ourself,  
Our uncle York lord governor of England; 220  
For he is just and always loved us well.  
Come on, our queen: to-morrow must we part,  
Be merry, for our time of stay is short. [*Flourish.*]

[*Exeunt King, Queen, Aumerle, Bushy, Green, and Bagot.*]

*North.* Well, lords, the Duke of Lancaster is dead.

*Ross.* And living too: for now his son is duke.

*Willo.* Barely in title, not in revenue.

*North.* Richly in both, if justice had her right.

*Ross.* My heart is great; but it must break with  
silence,

Ere't be disburden'd with a liberal tongue.

*North.* Nay, speak thy mind; and let him ne'er speak  
more 230

That speaks thy words again to do thee harm!

203. *sue his livery*, institute a suit as heir to obtain possession of lands which are in the Court of Wards.

*Willo.* Tends that thou wouldst speak to the Duke of Hereford?

If it be so, out with it boldly, man;  
Quick is mine ear to hear of good towards him.

*Ross.* No good at all that I can do for him;  
Unless you call it good to pity him,  
Bereft and gelded of his patrimony.

*North.* Now, afore God, 'tis shame such wrongs are borne

In him, a royal prince, and many moe  
Of noble blood in this declining land. 240  
The king is not himself, but basely led  
By flatterers; and what they will inform,  
Merely in hate, 'gainst any of us all,  
That will the king severely prosecute  
'Gainst us, our lives, our children, and our heirs.

*Ross.* The commons hath he pill'd with grievous taxes,  
And lost their hearts: the nobles hath he fined  
For ancient quarrels, and quite lost their hearts.

*Willo.* And daily new exactions are devised,  
As blanks, benevolences, and I wot not what: 250  
But what, o' God's name, doth become of this?

*North.* Wars have not wasted it, for warr'd he hath not,  
But basely yielded upon compromise  
That which his noble ancestors achieved with blows:  
More hath he spent in peace than they in wars.

*Ross.* The Earl of Wiltshire hath the realm in farm.

*Willo.* The king's grown bankrupt, like a broken man.

*North.* Reproach and dissolution hangeth over him.

*Ross.* He hath not money for these Irish wars,  
His burthenous taxations notwithstanding, 260  
But by the robbing of the banish'd duke.

*North.* His noble kinsman: most degenerate king!  
But, lords, we hear this fearful tempest sing,  
Yet seek no shelter to avoid the storm;  
We see the wind sit sore upon our sails,

237. *gelded*, deprived. 239. *moe*, more (in number).

246. *pill'd*, plundered.

And yet we strike not, but securely perish.

*Ross.* We see the very wreck that we must suffer;  
And unavoided is the danger now,  
For suffering so the causes of our wreck.

*North.* Not so; even through the hollow eyes of death 270  
I spy life peering; but I dare not say  
How near the tidings of our comfort is.

*Willo.* Nay, let us share thy thoughts, as thou dost ours.

*Ross.* Be confident to speak, Northumberland:  
We three are but thyself; and, speaking so,  
Thy words are but as thoughts; therefore, be bold.

*North.* Then thus: I have from Port le Blanc, a bay  
In Brittany, received intelligence  
That Harry Duke of Hereford, Rainold Lord Cobham,  
The son of Richard Earl of Arundel, 280  
That late broke from the Duke of Exeter,  
His brother, Archbishop late of Canterbury,  
Sir Thomas Erpingham, Sir John Ramston,  
Sir John Norbery, Sir Robert Waterton and Francis  
Quoint,

All these well furnish'd by the Duke of Bretagne  
With eight tall ships, three thousand men of war,  
Are making hither with all due expedience,  
And shortly mean to touch our northern shore:  
Perhaps they had ere this, but that they stay  
The first departing of the king for Ireland. 290  
If then we shall shake off our slavish yoke,  
Imp out our drooping country's broken wing,  
Redeem from broking pawn the blemish'd crown,  
Wipe off the dust that hides our sceptre's gilt  
And make high majesty look like itself,  
Away with me in post to Ravenspurgh;

266. *strike*, lower sail. *securely*, careless of danger.

268. *unavoided*, unavoidable, inevitable.

287. *expedience*, swiftness.

292. *Imp out*, piece out; the word was a technical term in falconry, and signified the process of grafting new feathers to a maimed wing.

296. *Ravenspurgh*, a seaport at the mouth of the Humber, entirely swept away by the sea at the end of the fifteenth century.

But if you faint, as fearing to do so,  
Stay and be secret, and myself will go.

*Ross.* To horse, to horse! urge doubts to them that  
fear.

*Will.* Hold out my horse, and I will first be there. 300  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Windsor Castle*

· *Enter QUEEN, BUSHY, and BAGOT*

*Bushy.* Madam, your majesty is too much sad:  
You promised, when you parted with the king,  
To lay aside life-harming heaviness  
And entertain a cheerful disposition.

*Queen.* To please the king I did; to please myself  
I cannot do it; yet I know no cause  
Why I should welcome such a guest as grief,  
Save bidding farewell to so sweet a guest  
As my sweet Richard: yet again, methinks,  
Some unborn sorrow, ripe in fortune's womb, 10  
Is coming towards me, and my inward soul  
With nothing trembles: at some thing it grieves,  
More than with parting from my lord the king.

*Bushy.* Each substance of a grief hath twenty shadows,  
Which shows like grief itself, but is not so;  
For sorrow's eye, glazed with blinding tears,  
Divides one thing entire to many objects;  
Like perspectives, which rightly gazed upon  
Show nothing but confusion, eyed awry  
Distinguish form: so your sweet majesty, 20  
Looking awry upon your lord's departure,  
Find shapes of grief, more than himself, to wail;  
Which, look'd on as it is, is nought but shadows  
Of what it is not. Then, thrice-gracious queen,

300. *Hold out my horse, if my horse hold out.*

18. *perspectives*, pictures or figures constructed so as to appear distorted except from one particular point of view.

More than your lord's departure weep not; more's not  
seen;

Or if it be, 'tis with false sorrow's eye,  
Which for things true weeps things imaginary.

*Queen.* It may be so; but yet my inward soul  
Persuades me it is otherwise; howe'er it be,  
I cannot but be sad; so heavy sad 30  
As, though on thinking on no thought I think,  
Makes me with heavy nothing faint and shrink.

*Bushy.* 'Tis nothing but conceit, my gracious lady.

*Queen.* 'Tis nothing less; conceit is still derived  
From some forefather grief; mine is not so,  
For nothing hath begot my something grief;  
Or something hath the nothing that I grieve;  
'Tis in reversion that I do possess;  
But what it is, that is not yet known; what  
I cannot name; 'tis nameless woe, I wot. 40

*Enter GREEN*

*Green.* God save your majesty! and well met, gentlemen:  
I hope the king is not yet shipp'd for Ireland.

*Queen.* Why hopest thou so? 'tis better hope he is;  
For his designs crave haste, his haste good hope:  
Then wherefore dost thou hope he is not shipp'd?

*Green.* That he, our hope, might have retired his  
power,  
And driven into despair an enemy's hope,  
Who strongly hath set footing in this land:  
The banish'd Bolingbroke repeals himself,  
And with uplifted arms is safe arrived 50  
At Ravenspurgh.

*Queen.* Now God in heaven forbid!

*Green.* Ah, madam, 'tis too true: and that is worse,  
The Lord Northumberland, his son young Henry Percy,  
The Lords of Ross, Beaumont, and Willoughby,



With all their powerful friends, are fled to him.

*Bushy.* Why have you not proclaim'd Northumberland  
And all the rest revolted faction traitors?

*Green.* We have: whereupon the Earl of Worcester  
Hath broke his staff, resign'd his stewardship,  
And all the household servants fled with him 60  
To Bolingbroke.

*Queen.* So, Green, thou art the midwife to my woe,  
And Bolingbroke my sorrow's dismal heir:  
Now hath my soul brought forth her prodigy,  
And I

Have woe to woe, sorrow to sorrow join'd.

*Bushy.* Despair not, madam.

*Queen.* Who shall hinder me?  
I will despair, and be at enmity

With cozening hope: he is a flatterer,  
A parasite, a keeper back of death, 70  
Who gently would dissolve the bands of life,  
Which false hope lingers in extremity.

*Enter YORK*

*Green.* Here comes the Duke of York.

*Queen.* With signs of war about his aged neck:  
O, full of careful business are his looks!  
Uncle, for God's sake, speak comfortable words.

*York.* Should I do so, I should belie my thoughts:  
Comfort's in heaven; and we are on the earth,  
Where nothing lives but crosses, cares and grief.  
Your husband, he is gone to save far off, 80  
Whilst others come to make him lose at home:  
Here am I left to underprop his land,  
Who, weak with age, cannot support myself:  
Now comes the sick hour that his surfeit made;  
Now shall he try his friends that flatter'd him.

*Enter a Servant*

*Serv.* My lord, your son was gone before I came.

75. *careful business*, anxious preoccupation.

*York.* He was? Why, so! go all which way it will!  
The nobles they are fled, the commons they are cold,  
And will, I fear, revolt on Hereford's side.  
*Sirrah,* get thee to Plashy, to my sister Gloucester; 90  
Bid her send me presently a thousand pound:  
Hold, take my ring.

*Serv.* My lord, I had forgot to tell your lordship,  
To-day, as I came by, I called there;  
But I shall grieve you to report the rest.

*York.* What is't, knave?

*Serv.* An hour before I came, the duchess died.

*York.* God for his mercy! what a tide of woes  
Comes rushing on this woeful land at once!  
I know not what to do: I would to God, 100  
So my untruth had not provoked him to it,  
The king had cut off my head with my brother's.  
What, are there no posts dispatch'd for Ireland?  
How shall we do for money for these wars?  
Come, sister,—cousin, I would say,—pray, pardon me.  
Go, fellow, get thee home, provide some carts  
And bring away the armour that is there. [*Exit Servant.*]  
Gentlemen, will you go muster men?

If I know how or which way to order these affairs  
Thus thrust disorderly into my hands, 110  
Never believe me. Both are my kinsmen:  
Th' one is my sovereign, whom both my oath  
And duty bids defend; th' other again  
Is my kinsman, whom the king hath wrong'd,  
Whom conscience and my kindred bids to right.  
Well, somewhat we must do. Come, cousin, I'll  
Dispose of you.

Gentlemen, go, muster up your men,  
And meet me presently at Berkeley.  
I should to Plashy too; 120  
But time will not permit: all is uneven,  
And everything is left at six and seven.

[*Exeunt York and Queen.*]

*Bushy.* The wind sits fair for news to go to Ireland,

But none returns. For us to levy power  
Proportionable to the enemy  
Is all impossible.

*Green.* Besides, our nearness to the king in love  
Is near the hate of those love not the king.

*Bagot.* And that's the wavering commons: for their  
love

Lies in their purses, and whoso empties them 130  
By so much fills their hearts with deadly hate.

*Bushy.* Wherein the king stands generally condemn'd.

*Bagot.* If judgement lie in them, then so do we,  
Because we ever have been near the king.

*Green.* Well, I will for refuge straight to Bristol castle:  
The Earl of Wiltshire is already there.

*Bushy.* Thither will I with you; for little office  
The hateful commons will perform for us,  
Except like curs to tear us all to pieces.  
Will you go along with us? 140

*Bagot.* No; I will to Ireland to his majesty.  
Farewell: if heart's presages be not vain,  
We three here part that ne'er shall meet again.

*Bushy.* That's as York thrives to beat back Bolingbroke.

*Green.* Alas, poor duke! the task he undertakes  
Is numbering sands and drinking oceans dry:  
Where one on his side fights, thousands will fly.  
Farewell at once, for once, for all, and ever.

*Bushy.* Well, we may meet again.

*Bagot.* I fear me, never. [Exeunt.]

### SCENE III. *Wilds in Gloucestershire*

*Enter BOLINGBROKE and NORTHUMBERLAND, with Forces*

*Boling.* How far is it, my lord, to Berkeley now?

*North.* Believe me, noble lord,  
I am a stranger here in Gloucestershire:  
These high wild hills and rough uneven ways

Draws out our miles, and makes them wearisome;  
And yet your fair discourse hath been as sugar,  
Making the hard way sweet and delectable.  
But I bethink me what a weary way  
From Ravenspurgh to Cotswold will be found  
In Ross and Willoughby, wanting your company, 10  
Which, I protest, hath very much beguiled  
The tediousness and process of my travel:  
But theirs is sweetened with the hope to have  
The present benefit which I possess;  
And hope to joy is little less in joy  
Than hope enjoy'd: by this the weary lords  
Shall make their way seem short, as mine hath done  
By sight of what I have, your noble company.  
*Boling.* Of much less value is my company  
Than your good words. But who comes here? 20

*Enter HENRY PERCY*

*North.* It is my son, young Harry Percy,  
Sent from my brother Worcester, whencesoever.  
Harry, how fares your uncle?

*Percy.* I had thought, my lord, to have learn'd his  
health of you.

*North.* Why, is he not with the queen?

*Percy.* No, my good lord; he hath forsook the court,  
Broken his staff of office and dispersed  
The household of the king.

*North.* What was his reason?  
He was not so resolved when last we spake together.

*Percy.* Because your lordship was proclaimed traitor. 30  
But he, my lord, is gone to Ravenspurgh,  
To offer service to the Duke of Hereford,  
And sent me over by Berkeley, to discover  
What power the Duke of York had levied there;  
Then with directions to repair to Ravenspurgh.

*North.* Have you forgot the Duke of Hereford, boy?

*Percy.* No, my good lord, for that is not forgot

Which ne'er I did remember: to my knowledge,  
I never in my life did look on him.

*North.* Then learn to know him now; this is the duke. 40

*Percy.* My gracious lord, I tender you my service,  
Such as it is, being tender, raw and young;  
Which elder days shall ripen and confirm  
To more approved service and desert.

*Boling.* I thank thee, gentle Percy; and be sure  
I count myself in nothing else so happy  
As in a soul remembering my good friends;  
And, as my fortune ripens with thy love,  
It shall be still thy true love's recompense:  
My heart this covenant makes, my hand thus seals it. 50

*North.* How far is it to Berkeley? and what stir  
Keeps good old York there with his men of war?

*Percy.* There stands the castle, by yon tuft of trees,  
Mann'd with three hundred men, as I have heard;  
And in it are the Lords of York, Berkeley, and Seymour;  
None else of name and noble estimate.

*Enter Ross and WILLOUGHBY*

*North.* Here come the Lords of Ross and Willoughby,  
Bloody with spurring, fiery-red with haste.

*Boling.* Welcome, my lords. I wot your love pursues  
A banish'd traitor: all my treasury 60  
Is yet but unfelt thanks, which more enrich'd  
Shall be your love and labour's recompense.

*Ross.* Your presence makes us rich, most noble lord.

*Willo.* And far surmounts our labour to attain it.

*Boling.* Evermore thanks, the exchequer of the poor;  
Which, till my infant fortune comes to years,  
Stands for my bounty. But who comes here?

*Enter BERKELEY*

*North.* It is my Lord of Berkeley, as I guess.

*Berk.* My Lord of Hereford, my message is to you.

*Boling.* My lord, my answer is—to Lancaster; 70  
And I am come to seek that name in England;

And I must find that title in your tongue,  
Before I make reply to aught you say.

*Berk.* Mistake me not, my lord; 'tis not my meaning  
To raze one title of your honour out:  
To you, my lord, I come, what lord you will,  
From the most gracious regent of this land,  
The Duke of York, to know what pricks you on  
To take advantage of the absent time  
And fright our native peace with self-borne arms. 80

*Enter YORK attended*

*Boling.* I shall not need transport my words by you;  
Here comes his Grace in person.

My noble uncle! [*Kneels.*]

*York.* Show me thy humble heart, and not thy knee,  
Whose duty is deceivable and false.

*Boling.* My gracious uncle—

*York.* Tut, tut!

Grace me no grace, nor uncle me no uncle:  
I am no traitor's uncle; and that word 'grace'  
In an ungracious mouth is but profane.  
Why have those banish'd and forbidden legs 90  
Dared once to touch a dust of England's ground?  
But then more 'why?' why have they dared to march  
So many miles upon her peaceful bosom,  
Frighting her pale-faced villages with war  
And ostentation of despised arms?  
Comest thou because the anointed king is hence?  
Why, foolish boy, the king is left behind,  
And in my loyal bosom lies his power.  
Were I but now the lord of such hot youth  
As when brave Gaunt, thy father, and myself 100  
Rescued the Black Prince, that young Mars of men,  
From forth the ranks of many thousand French,  
O, then how quickly should this arm of mine,  
Now prisoner to the palsy, chastise thee  
And minister correction to thy fault!

79. *absent time*, time of absence.

*Boling.* My gracious uncle, let me know my fault:  
On what condition stands it and wherein?

*York.* Even in condition of the worst degree,  
In gross rebellion and detested treason:  
Thou art a banish'd man, and here art come 110  
Before the expiration of thy time,  
In braving arms against thy sovereign.

*Boling.* As I was banish'd, I was banish'd Hereford;  
But as I come, I come for Lancaster.  
And, noble uncle, I beseech your Grace  
Look on my wrongs with an indifferent eye:  
You are my father, for methinks in you  
I see old Gaunt alive; O, then, my father,  
Will you permit that I shall stand condemn'd  
A wandering vagabond; my rights and royalties 120  
Pluck'd from my arms perforce and given away  
To upstart unthrifths? Wherefore was I born?  
If that my cousin king be King of England,  
It must be granted I am Duke of Lancaster.  
You have a son, Aumerle, my noble cousin;  
Had you first died, and he been thus trod down,  
He should have found his uncle Gaunt a father,  
To rouse his wrongs and chase them to the bay.  
I am denied to sue my livery here,  
And yet my letters-patents give me leave: 130  
My father's goods are all distrain'd and sold,  
And these and all are all amiss employ'd.  
What would you have me do? I am a subject,  
And I challenge law: attorneys are denied me;  
And therefore personally I lay my claim  
To my inheritance of free descent.

*North.* The noble duke hath been too much abused.

*Ross.* It stands your Grace upon to do him right.

*Willo.* Base men by his endowments are made great.

*York.* My lords of England, let me tell you this: 140  
I have had feeling of my cousin's wrongs  
And laboured all I could to do him right;

But in this kind to come, in braving arms,  
Be his own carver and cut out his way,  
To find out right with wrong, it may not be;  
And you that do abet him in this kind  
Cherish rebellion and are rebels all.

*North.* The noble duke hath sworn his coming is  
But for his own; and for the right of that  
We all have strongly sworn to give him aid; 150  
And let him ne'er see joy that breaks that oath!

*York.* Well, well, I see the issue of these arms:  
I cannot mend it, I must needs confess,  
Because my power is weak and all ill left:  
But if I could, by Him that gave me life,  
I would attach you all and make you stoop  
Unto the sovereign mercy of the king;  
But since I cannot, be it known to you  
I do remain as neuter. So, fare you well;  
Unless you please to enter in the castle 160  
And there repose you for this night.

*Boling.* An offer, uncle, that we will accept:  
But we must win your Grace to go with us  
To Bristol castle, which they say is held  
By Bushy, Bagot and their complices,  
The caterpillars of the commonwealth,  
Which I have sworn to weed and pluck away.

*York.* It may be I will go with you: but yet I'll pause;  
For I am loath to break our country's laws.  
Nor friends nor foes, to me welcome you are: 170  
Things past redress are now with me past care. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV. *A camp in Wales*

*Enter SALISBURY and a Welsh Captain*

*Cap.* My Lord of Salisbury, we have stay'd ten days,  
And hardly kept our countrymen together,

156. *attach, arrest.*      2. *hardly, with difficulty.*



And yet we hear no tidings from the king;  
Therefore we will disperse ourselves: farewell.

*Sal.* Stay yet another day, thou trusty Welshman:  
The king reposeth all his confidence in thee.

*Cap.* 'Tis thought the king is dead; we will not stay.  
The bay-trees in our country are all wither'd  
And meteors fright the fixed stars of heaven;  
The pale-faced moon looks bloody on the earth      10  
And lean-look'd prophets whisper fearful change;  
Rich men look sad and ruffians dance and leap,  
The one in fear to lose what they enjoy,  
The other to enjoy by rage and war:  
These signs forerun the death or fall of kings.  
Farewell: our countrymen are gone and fled,  
As well assured Richard their king is dead.      [Exit.

*Sal.* Ah, Richard, with the eyes of heavy mind  
I see thy glory like a shooting star  
Fall to the base earth from the firmament.      20  
Thy sun sets weeping in the lowly west,  
Witnessing storms to come, woe and unrest:  
Thy friends are fled to wait upon thy foes,  
And crossly to thy good all fortune goes.      [Exit.

## ACT III

SCENE I. *Bristol. Before the castle*

*Enter BOLINGBROKE, YORK, NORTHUMBERLAND, ROSS,  
PERCY, WILLOUGHBY, with BUSHY and GREEN, prisoners*

*Boling.* Bring forth these men.

Bushy and Green, I will not vex your souls—  
Since presently your souls must part your bodies—  
With too much urging your pernicious lives,  
For 'twere no charity; yet, to wash your blood  
From off my hands, here in the view of men  
I will unfold some causes of your deaths.  
You have misled a prince, a royal king,  
A happy gentleman in blood and lineaments,  
By you unhappied and disfigured clean: 10  
You have in manner with your sinful hours  
Made a divorce betwixt his queen and him,  
Broke the possession of a royal bed  
And stain'd the beauty of a fair queen's cheeks  
With tears drawn from her eyes by your foul wrongs.  
Myself, a prince by fortune of my birth,  
Near to the king in blood, and near in love  
Till you did make him misinterpret me,  
Have stoop'd my neck under your injuries,  
And sigh'd my English breath in foreign clouds, 20  
Eating the bitter bread of banishment;  
Whilst you have fed upon my signories,  
Dispark'd my parks and fell'd my forest woods,  
From my own windows torn my household coat,  
Razed out my imprese, leaving me no sign,  
Save men's opinions and my living blood,

22. *signories*, domains, estates.

25. *imprese*, device, emblem.

To show the world I am a gentleman.  
This and much more, much more than twice all this,  
Condemns you to the death. See them deliver'd over  
To execution and the hand of death. 30

*Bushy.* More welcome is the stroke of death to me  
Than Bolingbroke to England. Lords, farewell.

*Green.* My comfort is that heaven will take our souls  
And plague injustice with the pains of hell.

*Boling.* My Lord Northumberland, see them dispatch'd.

[*Exeunt Northumberland and others, with the prisoners.*]

Uncle, you say the queen is at your house;  
For God's sake, fairly let her be entreated:  
Tell her I send to her my kind commends;  
Take special care my greetings be deliver'd.

*York.* A gentleman of mine I have dispatch'd 40  
With letters of your love to her at large.

*Boling.* Thanks, gentle uncle. Come, lords, away,  
To fight with Glendower and his complices:  
Awhile to work, and after holiday. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The coast of Wales. A castle in view*

*Drums: flourish and colours. Enter KING RICHARD, the  
BISHOP OF CARLISLE, AUMERLE, and Soldiers*

*K. Rich.* Barkloughly castle call they this at hand?

*Aum.* Yea, my lord. How brooks your Grace the air,  
After your late tossing on the breaking seas?

*K. Rich.* Needs must I like it well: I weep for joy  
To stand upon my kingdom once again.  
Dear earth, I do salute thee with my hand,  
Though rebels wound thee with their horses' hoofs:  
As a long-parted mother with her child

38. *commends*, compliments.

1. *Barkloughly*, probably Harlech Castle in Merioneth.

2. *brooks*, enjoys.

Plays fondly with her tears and smiles in meeting,  
So, weeping, smiling, greet I thee, my earth, 10  
And do thee favours with my royal hands.  
Feed not thy sovereign's foe, my gentle earth,  
Nor with thy sweets comfort his ravenous sense;  
But let thy spiders, that suck up thy venom,  
And heavy-gaited toads lie in their way,  
Doing annoyance to the treacherous feet  
Which with usurping steps do trample thee:  
Yield stinging nettles to mine enemies;  
And when they from thy bosom pluck a flower,  
Guard it, I pray thee, with a lurking adder 20  
Whose double tongue may with a mortal touch  
Throw death upon thy sovereign's enemies.  
Mock not my senseless conjuration, lords:  
This earth shall have a feeling and these stones  
Prove armed soldiers, ere her native king  
Shall falter under foul rebellion's arms.

*Car.* Fear not, my lord: that Power that made you  
king

Hath power to keep you king in spite of all.  
The means that heaven yields must be embraced,  
And not neglected; else, if heaven would, 30  
And we will not, heaven's offer we refuse,  
The proffer'd means of succour and redress.

*Aum.* He means, my lord, that we are too remiss;  
Whilst Bolingbroke, through our security,  
Grows strong and great in substance and in power.

*K. Rich.* Discomfortable cousin! know'st thou not  
That when the searching eye of heaven is hid,  
Behind the globe, that lights the lower world,  
Then thieves and robbers range abroad unseen  
In murders and in outrage, boldly here; 40  
But when from under this terrestrial ball  
He fires the proud tops of the eastern pines  
And darts his light through every guilty hole,

21. *mortal*, deadly, fatal.

23. *senseless conjuration*, appeal to inanimate objects.

Then murders, treasons and detested sins,  
The cloak of night being pluck'd from off their backs,  
Stand bare and naked, trembling at themselves?  
So when this thief, this traitor, Bolingbroke,  
Who all this while hath revell'd in the night  
Whilst we were wandering with the Antipodes,  
Shall see us rising in our throne, the east, 50  
His treasons will sit blushing in his face,  
Not able to endure the sight of day,  
But self-affrighted tremble at his sin.  
Not all the water in the rough rude sea  
Can wash the balm off from an anointed king;  
The breath of worldly men cannot depose  
The deputy elected by the Lord:  
For every man that Bolingbroke hath press'd  
To lift shrewd steel against our golden crown,  
God for his Richard hath in heavenly pay 60  
A glorious angel: then, if angels fight,  
Weak men must fall, for heaven still guards the right.

*Enter SALISBURY*

Welcome, my lord: how far off lies your power?

*Sal.* Nor near nor farther off, my gracious lord,  
Than this weak arm: discomfort guides my tongue  
And bids me speak of nothing but despair.  
One day too late, I fear me, noble lord,  
Hath clouded all thy happy days on earth:  
O, call back yesterday, bid time return,  
And thou shalt have twelve thousand fighting men! 70  
To-day, to-day, unhappy day, too late,  
O'erthrows thy joys, friends, fortune and thy state:  
For all the Welshmen, hearing thou wert dead,  
Are gone to Bolingbroke, dispersed and fled.

*Aum.* Comfort, my liege: why looks your Grace so pale?

*K. Rich.* But now the blood of twenty thousand men

49. *Antipodes*, those who dwell on the opposite side of the globe.

Did triumph in my face, and they are fled;  
And, till so much blood thither come again,  
Have I not reason to look pale and dead?  
All souls that will be safe fly from my side, 80  
For time hath set a blot upon my pride.

*Aum.* Comfort, my liege; remember who you are.

*K. Rich.* I had forgot myself: am I not king?  
Awake, thou coward majesty! thou sleepest.  
Is not the king's name twenty thousand names?  
Arm, arm, my name! a puny subject strikes  
At thy great glory. Look not to the ground,  
Ye favourites of a king: are we not high?  
High be our thoughts: I know my uncle York  
Hath power enough to serve our turn. But who comes 90  
here?

*Enter SCROOP*

*Scroop.* More health and happiness betide my liege  
Than can my care-tuned tongue deliver him!

*K. Rich.* Mine ear is open and my heart prepared:  
The worst is worldly loss thou canst unfold.  
Say, is my kingdom lost? why, 'twas my care;  
And what loss is it to be rid of care?  
Strives Bolingbroke to be as great as we?  
Greater he shall not be; if he serve God,  
We'll serve Him too and be his fellow so:  
Revolt our subjects? that we cannot mend; 100  
They break their faith to God as well as us:  
Cry woe, destruction, ruin and decay;  
The worst is death, and death will have his day.

*Scroop.* Glad am I that your highness is so arm'd  
To bear the tidings of calamity.  
Like an unseasonable stormy day,  
Which makes the silver rivers drown their shores,  
As if the world were all dissolved to tears,  
So high above his limits swells the rage  
Of Bolingbroke, covering your fearful land 110  
With hard bright steel and hearts harder than steel.

White-beards have arm'd their thin and hairless scalps  
Against thy majesty; boys, with women's voices,  
Strive to speak big and clap their female joints  
In stiff unwieldy arms against thy crown:  
Thy very beadsmen learn to bend their bows  
Of double-fatal yew against thy state;  
Yea, distaff-women manage rusty bills  
Against thy seat: both young and old rebel,  
And all goes worse than I have power to tell. 120

*K. Rich.* Too well, too well thou tell'st a tale so ill.  
Where is the Earl of Wiltshire? where is Bagot?  
What is become of Bushy? where is Green?  
That they have let the dangerous enemy  
Measure our confines with such peaceful steps?  
If we prevail, their heads shall pay for it:  
I warrant they have made peace with Bolingbroke.

*Scroop.* Peace have they made with him indeed, my lord.

*K. Rich.* O villains, vipers, damn'd without redemption!

Dogs, easily won to fawn on any man! 130  
Snakes, in my heart-blood warm'd, that sting my heart!  
Three Judases, each one thrice worse than Judas!  
Would they make peace? terrible hell make war  
Upon their spotted souls for this offence!

*Scroop.* Sweet love, I see, changing his property,  
Turns to the sourest and most deadly hate:  
Again uncurse their souls; their peace is made  
With heads, and not with hands: those whom you curse  
Have felt the worst of death's destroying wound  
And lie full low, graved in the hollow ground. 140

*Aum.* Is Bushy, Green, and the Earl of Wiltshire dead?

*Scroop.* Ay, all of them at Bristol lost their heads.

116. *beadsmen*, pensioners or almsmen.

117. *double-fatal yew*. Bows were made of yew, and its berries are poisonous.

118. *bills*. The bill was a weapon consisting of a long wooden handle with an axe and a spike at its end.

135. *property*, native quality.

*Aum.* Where is the duke my father with his power?

*K. Rich.* No matter where; of comfort no man speak:  
Let's talk of graves, of worms and epitaphs;  
Make dust our paper and with rainy eyes  
Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth.  
Let's choose executors and talk of wills:  
And yet not so, for what can we bequeath  
Save our deposed bodies to the ground? 150  
Our lands, our lives and all are Bolingbroke's,  
And nothing can we call our own but death  
And that small model of the barren earth  
Which serves as paste and cover to our bones.  
For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground  
And tell sad stories of the death of kings:  
How some have been deposed; some slain in war;  
Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed;  
Some poison'd by their wives; some sleeping kill'd;  
All murder'd: for within the hollow crown 160  
That rounds the mortal temples of a king  
Keeps Death his court, and there the antic sits,  
Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,  
Allowing him a breath, a little scene,  
To monarchize, be fear'd and kill with looks,  
Infusing him with self and vain conceit,  
As if this flesh which walls about our life  
Were brass impregnable, and humour'd thus  
Comes at the last and with a little pin  
Bores through his castle wall, and farewell king! 170  
Cover your heads and mock not flesh and blood  
With solemn reverence: throw away respect,  
Tradition, form and ceremonious duty,  
For you have but mistook me all this while:  
I live with bread like you, feel want,  
Taste grief, need friends: subjected thus,  
How can you say to me, I am a king?

*Car.* My lord, wise men ne'er sit and wail their woes,  
But presently prevent the ways to wail.

162. *antic*, buffoon, merry-andrew.

179. *presently*, at once.



To fear the foe, since fear oppresseth strength, 180  
Gives in your weakness strength unto your foe,  
And so your follies fight against yourself.  
Fear, and be slain; no worse can come to fight:  
And fight and die is death destroying death;  
Where fearing dying pays death servile breath.

*Aum.* My father hath a power; inquire of him,  
And learn to make a body of a limb.

*K. Rich.* Thou chidest me well: proud Bolingbroke,  
I come

To change blows with thee for our day of doom.  
This ague fit of fear is over-blown; 190  
An easy task it is to win our own.

Say, Scroop, where lies our uncle with his power?  
Speak sweetly, man, although thy looks be sour.

*Scroop.* Men judge by the complexion of the sky  
The state and inclination of the day:

So may you by my dull and heavy eye,

My tongue hath but a heavier tale to say.

I play the torturer, by small and small

To lengthen out the worst that must be spoken:

Your uncle York is join'd with Bolingbroke, 200

And all your northern castles yielded up,

And all your southern gentlemen in arms

Upon his party.

*K. Rich.* Thou hast said enough.  
Beshrew thee, cousin, which didst lead me forth

[*To Aumerle.*]

Of that sweet way I was in to despair!

What say you now? what comfort have we now?

By heaven, I'll hate him everlastingly

That bids me be of comfort any more.

Go to Flint castle: there I'll pine away;

A king, woe's slave, shall kingly woe obey. 210

That power I have, discharge; and let them go

To ear the land that hath some hope to grow,

For I have none: let no man speak again

To alter this, for counsel is but vain.

*Aum.* My liege, one word.

*K. Rich.* He does me double wrong  
That wounds me with the flatteries of his tongue.  
Discharge my followers: let them hence away,  
From Richard's night to Bolingbroke's fair day. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *Wales. Before Flint castle*

*Enter, with drum and colours, BOLINGBROKE, YORK,  
NORTHUMBERLAND, Attendants, and Forces*

*Boling.* So that by this intelligence we learn  
The Welshmen are dispersed, and Salisbury  
Is gone to meet the king, who lately landed  
With some few private friends upon this coast.

*North.* The news is very fair and good, my lord:  
Richard not far from hence hath hid his head.

*York.* It would beseem the Lord Northumberland  
To say 'King Richard': alack the heavy day  
When such a sacred king should hide his head.

*North.* Your Grace mistakes; only to be brief,  
Left I his title out.

*York.* The time hath been, 10  
Would you have been so brief with him, he would  
Have been so brief with you, to shorten you,  
For taking so the head, your whole head's length.

*Boling.* Mistake not, uncle, further than you should.

*York.* Take not, good cousin, further than you should,  
Lest you mistake the heavens are o'er our heads.

*Boling.* I know it, uncle, and oppose not myself  
Against their will. But who comes here?

*Enter PERCY*

Welcome, Harry: what, will not this castle yield? 20

*Percy.* The castle royally is mann'd, my lord,  
Against thy entrance.

*Boling.* Royally!

Why, it contains no king?

*Percy.*

Yes, my good lord,

It doth contain a king; King Richard lies  
Within the limits of yon lime and stone:  
And with him are the Lord Aumerle, Lord Salisbury,  
Sir Stephen Scroop, besides a clergyman  
Of holy reverence; who, I cannot learn.

*North.* O, belike it is the Bishop of Carlisle.

30

*Boling.* Noble lords,

Go to the rude ribs of that ancient castle;  
Through brazen trumpet send the breath of parley  
Into his ruin'd ears, and thus deliver:

Henry Bolingbroke

On both his knees doth kiss King Richard's hand

And sends allegiance and true faith of heart

To his most royal person, hither come

Even at his feet to lay my arms and power,

Provided that my banishment repeal'd

40

And lands restored again be freely granted:

If not, I'll use the advantage of my power

And lay the summer's dust with showers of blood

Rain'd from the wounds of slaughter'd Englishmen:

The which, how far off from the mind of Bolingbroke

It is, such crimson tempest should bedrench

The fresh green lap of fair King Richard's land,

My stooping duty tenderly shall show.

Go, signify as much, while here we march

Upon the grassy carpet of this plain.

50

Let's march without the noise of threatening drum,

That from this castle's tatter'd battlements

Our fair appointments may be well perused.

Methinks King Richard and myself should meet

With no less terror than the elements

Of fire and water, when their thundering shock

At meeting tears the cloudy cheeks of heaven.

Be he the fire, I'll be the yielding water:

The rage be his, whilst on the earth I rain

My waters; on the earth, and not on him. 60  
March on, and mark King Richard how he looks.

*Parle without, and answer within. Then a flourish. Enter  
on the walls, KING RICHARD, the BISHOP OF CARLISLE,  
AUMERLE, SCROOP, and SALISBURY.*

See, see, King Richard doth himself appear,  
As doth the blushing discontented sun  
From out the fiery portal of the east,  
When he perceives the envious clouds are bent  
To dim his glory and to stain the track  
Of his bright passage to the occident.

*York.* Yet looks he like a king: behold, his eye,  
As bright as is the eagle's, lightens forth  
Controlling majesty: alack, alack, for woe, 70  
That any harm should stain so fair a show!

*K. Rich.* We are amazed; and thus long have we  
stood

To watch the fearful bending of thy knee, [To North.  
Because we thought ourself thy lawful king:

And if we be, how dare thy joints forget  
To pay their awful duty to our presence?  
If we be not, show us the hand of God  
That hath dismiss'd us from our stewardship;  
For well we know, no hand of blood and bone  
Can gripe the sacred handle of our sceptre, 80  
Unless he do profane, steal, or usurp.

And though you think that all, as you have done,  
Have torn their souls by turning them from us,  
And we are barren and bereft of friends;  
Yet know, my master, God omnipotent,  
Is mustering in his clouds on our behalf  
Armies of pestilence; and they shall strike  
Your children yet unborn and unbegot,  
That lift your vassal hands against my head  
And threat the glory of my precious crown. 90

Tell Bolingbroke—for yond methinks he stands—  
That every stride he makes upon my land

Is dangerous treason: he is come to open  
The purple testament of bleeding war;  
But ere the crown he looks for live in peace,  
Ten thousand bloody crowns of mothers' sons  
Shall ill become the flower of England's face,  
Change the complexion of her maid-pale peace  
To scarlet indignation and bedew  
Her pastures' grass with faithful English blood. 100

*North.* The king of heaven forbid our lord the king  
Should so with civil and uncivil arms  
Be rush'd upon! Thy thrice noble cousin  
Harry Bolingbroke doth humbly kiss thy hand;  
And by the honourable tomb he swears,  
That stands upon your royal grandsire's bones,  
And by the royalties of both your bloods,  
Currents that spring from one most gracious head,  
And by the buried hand of warlike Gaunt,  
And by the worth and honour of himself, 110  
Comprising all that may be sworn or said,  
His coming hither hath no further scope  
Than for his lineal royalties and to beg  
Enfranchisement immediate on his knees:  
Which on thy royal party granted once,  
His glittering arms he will commend to rust,  
His barbed steeds to stables, and his heart  
To faithful service of your majesty.  
This swears he, as he is a prince, is just;  
And, as I am a gentleman, I credit him. 120

*K. Rich.* Northumberland, say thus the king returns:  
His noble cousin is right welcome hither;  
And all the number of his fair demands  
Shall be accomplish'd without contradiction:  
With all the gracious utterance thou hast  
Speak to his gentle hearing kind commends.

94. *testament*, will. To open a will is the first step towards carrying out its provisions. 98. *maid-pale*, virgin-white.

114. *Enfranchisement*, restoration to his rights as a free subject.

117. *barbed*, wearing armour.

We do debase ourselves, cousin, do we not, [*To Aumerle.*  
To look so poorly and to speak so fair?

Shall we call back Northumberland, and send  
Defiance to the traitor, and so die? 130

*Aum.* No, good my lord; let's fight with gentle words  
Till time lend friends and friends their helpful swords.

*K. Rich.* O God, O God! that e'er this tongue of mine,  
That laid the sentence of dread banishment  
On yon proud man, should take it off again  
With words of sooth! O that I were as great  
As is my grief, or lesser than my name!

Or that I could forget what I have been,  
Or not remember what I must be now!  
Swell'st thou, proud heart? I'll give thee scope to beat,  
Since foes have scope to beat both thee and me. 141

*Aum.* Northumberland comes back from Bolingbroke.

*K. Rich.* What must the king do now? must he submit?

The king shall do it: must he be deposed?  
The king shall be contented: must he lose  
The name of king? o' God's name, let it go:  
I'll give my jewels for a set of beads,  
My gorgeous palace for a hermitage,  
My gay apparel for an almsman's gown,  
My figured goblets for a dish of wood, 150  
My sceptre for a palmer's walking-staff,  
My subjects for a pair of carved saints  
And my large kingdom for a little grave,  
A little little grave, an obscure grave;  
Or I'll be buried in the king's highway,  
Some way of common trade, where subjects' feet  
May hourly trample on their sovereign's head;  
For on my heart they tread now whilst I live;  
And buried once, why not upon my head?

Aumerle, thou weep'st, my tender-hearted cousin! 160  
We'll make foul weather with despised tears;  
Our sighs and they shall lodge the summer corn,

And make a dearth in this revolting land.  
Or shall we play the wantons with our woes,  
And make some pretty match with shedding tears?  
As thus, to drop them still upon one place,  
Till they have fretted us a pair of graves  
Within the earth; and, therein laid,—there lies  
Two kinsmen digg'd their graves with weeping eyes.  
Would not this ill do well? Well, well, I see 170  
I talk but idly, and you laugh at me.  
Most mighty prince, my Lord Northumberland,  
What says King Bolingbroke? will his majesty  
Give Richard leave to live till Richard die?  
You make a leg, and Bolingbroke says ay.

*North.* My lord, in the base court he doth attend  
To speak with you; may it please you to come down.

*K. Rich.* Down, down I come; like glistening Phaethon,  
Wanting the manage of unruly jades.  
In the base court? Base court, where kings grow base, 180  
To come at traitors' calls and do them grace.  
In the base court? Come down? Down, court! down,  
king!

For night-owls shriek where mounting larks should sing.  
[*Exeunt from above.*]

*Boling.* What says his majesty?

*North.* Sorrow and grief of heart  
Makes him speak fondly, like a frantic man:  
Yet he is come.

*Enter KING RICHARD and his attendants below*

*Boling.* Stand all apart,  
And show fair duty to his majesty. [He kneels down.  
My gracious lord,—

175. *make a leg*, make an obeisance by drawing back one leg and bending the other; a modified curtsy.

178. *Phaethon*, the son of Apollo who was allowed to drive the chariot of the sun for one day, but who lost control of the horses and almost set the earth on fire. Jupiter slew him with a flash of lightning.  
185. *fondly*, foolishly.

*K. Rich.* Fair cousin, you debase your princely knee  
To make the base earth proud with kissing it: 191  
Me rather had my heart might feel your love  
Than my unpleased eye see your courtesy.  
Up, cousin, up; your heart is up, I know,  
Thus high at least, although your knee be low.

*Boling.* My gracious lord, I come but for mine own.

*K. Rich.* Your own is yours, and I am yours, and all.

*Boling.* So far be mine, my most redoubted lord,  
As my true service shall deserve your love.

*K. Rich.* Well you deserve: they well deserve to have,  
That know the strong'st and surest way to get. 201

Uncle, give me your hands: nay, dry your eyes;  
Tears show their love, but want their remedies.

Cousin, I am too young to be your father,  
Though you are old enough to be my heir.

What you will have, I'll give, and willing too;  
For do we must what force will have us do.

Set on towards London, cousin, is it so?

*Boling.* Yea, my good lord.

*K. Rich.* Then I must not say no.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV. *Langley. The DUKE OF YORK's garden*

*Enter the QUEEN and two Ladies*

*Queen.* What sport shall we devise here in this garden,  
To drive away the heavy thought of care?

*Lady.* Madam, we'll play at bowls.

*Queen.* 'Twill make me think the world is full of rubs,  
And that my fortune runs against the bias.

*Lady.* Madam, we'll dance.

4. *rubs*, obstacles by which bowls are diverted from their proper course.

5. *bias*, one-sided form of the bowl which gives an oblique motion to it.



*Queen.* My legs can keep no measure in delight,  
When my poor heart no measure keeps in grief:  
Therefore, no dancing, girl; some other sport.

*Lady.* Madam, we'll tell tales.

10

*Queen.* Of sorrow or of joy?

*Lady.* Of either, madam.

*Queen.* Of neither, girl:

For if of joy, being altogether wanting,  
It doth remember me the more of sorrow;  
Or if of grief, being altogether had,  
It adds more sorrow to my want of joy:  
For what I have I need not to repeat;  
And what I want it boots not to complain.

*Lady.* Madam, I'll sing.

*Queen.* 'Tis well that thou hast cause;  
But thou shouldst please me better, wouldst thou weep. 20

*Lady.* I could weep, madam, would it do you good.

*Queen.* And I could sing, would weeping do me good,  
And never borrow any tear of thee.

*Enter a Gardener, and two Servants*

But stay, here come the gardeners:  
Let's step into the shadow of these trees.  
My wretchedness unto a row of pins,  
They'll talk of state; for every one doth so  
Against a change; woe is forerun with woe.

*[Queen and Ladies retire.]*

*Gard.* Go, bind thou up yon dangling apricocks,  
Which, like unruly children, make their sire 30  
Stoop with oppression of their prodigal weight:  
Give some supportance to the bending twigs.  
Go thou, and like an executioner,  
Cut off the heads of too fast growing sprays,  
That look too lofty in our commonwealth:  
All must be even in our government.  
You thus employ'd, I will go root away  
The noisome weeds, which without profit suck  
The soil's fertility from wholesome flowers.

*Serv.* Why should we in the compass of a pale 40  
Keep law and form and due proportion,  
Showing, as in a model, our firm estate,  
When our sea-walled garden, the whole land,  
Is full of weeds, her fairest flowers choked up,  
Her fruit-trees all unpruned, her hedges ruin'd,  
Her knots disorder'd and her wholesome herbs  
Swarming with caterpillars?

*Gard.* Hold thy peace:  
He that hath suffer'd this disorder'd spring  
Hath now himself met with the fall of leaf:  
The weeds which his broad-spreading leaves did shelter,  
That seem'd in eating him to hold him up, 51  
Are pluck'd up root and all by Bolingbroke,  
I mean the Earl of Wiltshire, Bushy, Green.

*Serv.* What, are they dead?

*Gard.* They are; and Bolingbroke  
Hath seized the wasteful king. O, what pity is it  
That he had not so trimm'd and dress'd his land  
As we this garden! We at time of year  
Do wound the bark, the skin of our fruit-trees,  
Lest, being over-proud in sap and blood,  
With too much riches it confound itself: 60  
Had he done so to great and growing men,  
They might have lived to bear and he to taste  
Their fruits of duty: superfluous branches  
We lop away, that bearing boughs may live:  
Had he done so, himself had borne the crown,  
Which waste of idle hours hath quite thrown down.

*Serv.* What, think you then the king shall be deposed?

*Gard.* Depress'd he is already, and deposed  
'Tis doubt he will be: letters came last night  
To a dear friend of the good Duke of York's, 70  
That tell black tidings.

*Queen.* O, I am press'd to death through want of  
speaking! [Coming forward.]

40. *pale*, enclosure.

46. *knots*, flower-beds laid out in fanciful designs.

Thou, old Adam's likeness, set to dress this garden,  
How dares thy harsh rude tongue sound this displeasing  
news?

What Eve, what serpent, hath suggested thee  
To make a second fall of cursed man?  
Why dost thou say King Richard is deposed?  
Darest thou, thou little better thing than earth,  
Divine his downfall? Say, where, when, and how,  
Camest thou by this ill tidings? speak, thou wretch. 80

*Gard.* Pardon me, madam: little joy have I  
To breathe this news; yet what I say is true.  
King Richard, he is in the mighty hold  
Of Bolingbroke: their fortunes both are weigh'd:  
In your lord's scale is nothing but himself,  
And some few vanities that make him light;  
But in the balance of great Bolingbroke,  
Besides himself, are all the English peers,  
And with that odds he weighs King Richard down.  
Post you to London, and you will find it so; 90  
I speak no more than every one doth know.

*Queen.* Nimble mischance, that art so light of foot,  
Doth not thy embassy belong to me,  
And am I last that knows it? O, thou think'st  
To serve me last, that I may longest keep  
Thy sorrow in my breast. Come, ladies, go,  
To meet at London London's king in woe.  
What, was I born to this, that my sad look  
Should grace the triumph of great Bolingbroke?  
Gardener, for telling me these news of woe, 100  
Pray God the plants thou graft'st may never grow.

[*Exeunt Queen and Ladies.*]

*Gard.* Poor queen! so that thy state might be no worse,  
I would my skill were subject to thy curse.  
Here did she fall a tear; here in this place  
I'll set a bank of rue, sour herb of grace:  
Rue, even for ruth, here shortly shall be seen,  
In the remembrance of a weeping queen. [*Exeunt.*]

104. *fall*, let fall.

## ACT IV

SCENE I. *Westminster Hall*

*Enter, as to the Parliament, BOLINGBROKE, AUMERLE, NORTHUMBERLAND, PERCY, FITZWATER, SURREY, the BISHOP OF CARLISLE, the ABBOT OF WESTMINSTER, and another Lord, Herald, Officers, and BAGOT.*

*Boling.* Call forth Bagot.

Now, Bagot, freely speak thy mind;  
What thou dost know of noble Gloucester's death,  
Who wrought it with the king, and who perform'd  
The bloody office of his timeless end.

*Bagot.* Then set before my face the Lord Aumerle.

*Boling.* Cousin, stand forth, and look upon that man.

*Bagot.* My Lord Aumerle, I know your daring tongue  
Scorns to unsay what once it hath deliver'd.  
In that dead time when Gloucester's death was plotted, 10  
I heard you say, 'Is not my arm of length,  
That reacheth from the restful English court  
As far as Calais, to mine uncle's head?'  
Amongst much other talk, that very time,  
I heard you say that you had rather refuse  
The offer of an hundred thousand crowns  
Than Bolingbroke's return to England;  
Adding withal, how blest this land would be  
In this your cousin's death.

*Aum.*

Princes and noble lords,

What answer shall I make to this base man?  
Shall I so much dishonour my fair stars,  
On equal terms to give him chastisement?  
Either I must, or have mine honour soil'd

20

With the attainder of his slanderous lips.  
There is my gage, the manual seal of death,  
That marks thee out for hell: I say, thou liest,  
And will maintain what thou hast said is false  
In thy heart-blood, though being all too base  
To stain the temper of my knightly sword.

*Boling.* Bagot, forbear; thou shalt not take it up. 30

*Aum.* Excepting one, I would he were the best  
In all this presence that hath moved me so.

*Fitz.* If that thy valour stand on sympathy,  
There is my gage, Aumerle, in gage to thine:  
By that fair sun which shows me where thou stand'st,  
I heard thee say, and vauntingly thou spakest it,  
That thou wert cause of noble Gloucester's death.  
If thou deny'st it twenty times, thou liest;  
And I will turn thy falsehood to thy heart,  
Where it was forged, with my rapier's point. 40

*Aum.* Thou darest not, coward, live to see that day.

*Fitz.* Now, by my soul, I would it were this hour.

*Aum.* Fitzwater, thou art damn'd to hell for this.

*Percy.* Aumerle, thou liest; his honour is as true  
In this appeal as thou art all unjust;  
And that thou art so, there I throw my gage,  
To prove it on thee to the extremest point  
Of mortal breathing: seize it, if thou darest.

*Aum.* An if I do not, may my hands rot off  
And never brandish more revengeful steel 50  
Over the glittering helmet of my foe!

*Another Lord.* I task the earth to the like, forsworn  
Aumerle;  
And spur thee on with full as many lies  
As may be holloa'd in thy treacherous ear  
From sun to sun: there is my honour's pawn;  
Engage it to the trial, if thou darest.

*Aum.* Who sets me else? by heaven, I'll throw at all:  
I have a thousand spirits in one breast,  
To answer twenty thousand such as you.

57. *Who sets me else?*, who else lays down stakes?

*Surrey.* My Lord Fitzwater, I do remember well . 60  
The very time Aumerle and you did talk.

*Fitz.* 'Tis very true: you were in presence then;  
And you can witness with me this is true.

*Surrey.* As false, by heaven, as heaven itself is true.

*Fitz.* Surrey, thou liest.

*Surrey.* Dishonourable boy!

That lie shall lie so heavy on my sword,  
That it shall render vengeance and revenge  
Till thou the lie-giver and that lie do lie  
In earth as quiet as thy father's skull:  
In proof whereof, there is my honour's pawn; 70  
Engage it to the trial, if thou darest.

*Fitz.* How fondly dost thou spur a forward horse!  
If I dare eat, or drink, or breathe, or live,  
I dare meet Surrey in a wilderness,  
And spit upon him, whilst I say he lies,  
And lies, and lies: there is my bond of faith,  
To tie thee to my strong correction.  
As I intend to thrive in this new world,  
Aumerle is guilty of my true appeal:  
Besides, I heard the banish'd Norfolk say 80  
That thou, Aumerle, didst send two of thy men  
To execute the noble duke at Calais.

*Aum.* Some honest Christian trust me with a gage,  
That Norfolk lies: here do I throw down this,  
If he may be repeal'd, to try his honour.

*Boling.* These differences shall all rest under gage  
Till Norfolk be repeal'd: repeal'd he shall be,  
And, though mine enemy, restored again  
To all his lands and signories: when he's return'd,  
Against Aumerle we will enforce his trial. 90

*Car.* That honourable day shall ne'er be seen.  
Many a time hath banish'd Norfolk fought  
For Jesu Christ in glorious Christian field,  
Streaming the ensign of the Christian cross  
Against black pagans, Turks, and Saracens;

And toil'd with works of war, retired himself  
To Italy; and there at Venice gave  
His body to that pleasant country's earth,  
And his pure soul unto his captain Christ,  
Under whose colours he had fought so long. 100

*Boling.* Why, bishop, is Norfolk dead?

*Car.* As surely as I live, my lord.

*Boling.* Sweet peace conduct his sweet soul to the  
bosom

Of good old Abraham! Lords appellants,  
Your differences shall all rest under gage  
Till we assign you to your days of trial.

*Enter YORK, attended*

*York.* Great Duke of Lancaster, I come to thee  
From plume-pluck'd Richard; who with willing soul  
Adopts thee heir, and his high sceptre yields  
To the possession of thy royal hand: 110  
Ascend his throne, descending now from him;  
And long live Henry, fourth of that name!

*Boling.* In God's name, I'll ascend the regal throne.

*Car.* Marry, God forbid!

Worst in this royal presence may I speak,  
Yet best beseeming me to speak the truth.  
Would God that any in this noble presence  
Were enough noble to be upright judge  
Of noble Richard! then true noblesse would  
Learn him forbearance from so foul a wrong. 120  
What subject can give sentence on his king?  
And who sits here that is not Richard's subject?  
Thieves are not judged but they are by to hear,  
Although apparent guilt be seen in them;  
And shall the figure of God's majesty,  
His captain, steward, deputy-elect,  
Anointed, crowned, planted many years,  
Be judged by subject and inferior breath,  
And he himself not present? O, forfend it, God,  
That in a Christian climate souls refined 130

Should show so heinous, black, obscene a deed!  
I speak to subjects, and a subject speaks,  
Stirr'd up by God, thus boldly for his king.  
My Lord of Hereford here, whom you call king,  
Is a foul traitor to proud Hereford's king:  
And if you crown him, let me prophesy:  
The blood of English shall manure the ground,  
And future ages groan for this foul act;  
Peace shall go sleep with Turks and infidels,  
And in this seat of peace tumultuous wars       140  
Shall kin with kin and kind with kind confound:  
Disorder, horror, fear and mutiny  
Shall here inhabit, and this land be call'd  
The field of Golgotha and dead men's skulls.  
O, if you raise this house against this house,  
It will the woefullest division prove  
That ever fell upon this cursed earth.  
Prevent it, resist it, let it not be so,  
Lest child, child's children, cry against you 'woe!'

*North.* Well have you argued, sir; and, for your pains,  
Of capital treason we arrest you here.       151

My Lord of Westminster, be it your charge  
To keep him safely till his day of trial.  
May it please you, lords, to grant the commons' suit.

*Boling.* Fetch hither Richard, that in common view  
He may surrender; so we shall proceed  
Without suspicion.

*York.* I will be his conduct.       [*Exit.*]

*Boling.* Lords, you that here are under our arrest,  
Procure your sureties for your days of answer.  
Little are we beholding to your love,       160  
And little look'd for at your helping hands.

*Re-enter YORK, with RICHARD, and Officers bearing the  
regalia*

*K. Rich.* Alack, why am I sent for to a king,  
Before I have shook off the regal thoughts



Wherewith I reign'd? I hardly yet have learn'd  
To insinuate, flatter, bow, and bend my limbs:  
Give sorrow leave awhile to tutor me  
To this submission. Yet I will remember  
The favours of these men: were they not mine?  
Did they not sometime cry, 'all hail!' to me?  
So Judas did to Christ: but he, in twelve, 170  
Found truth in all but one; I, in twelve thousand, none.  
God save the king! Will no man say amen?  
Am I both priest and clerk? well, then, amen.  
God save the king! although I be not he;  
And yet, amen, if heaven do think him me.  
To do what service am I sent for hither?

*York.* To do that office of thine own good will  
Which tired majesty did make thee offer,  
The resignation of thy state and crown  
To Henry Bolingbroke. 180

*K. Rich.* Give me the crown. Here, cousin, seize the  
crown;  
Here cousin;

On this side my hand, and on that side yours.  
Now is this golden crown like a deep well  
That owes two buckets, filling one another,  
The emptier ever dancing in the air,  
The other down, unseen and full of water:  
That bucket down and full of tears am I,  
Drinking my griefs, whilst you mount up on high.

*Boling.* I thought you had been willing to resign. 190

*K. Rich.* My crown I am; but still my griefs are  
mine:

You may my glories and my state depose,  
But not my griefs, still am I king of those.

*Boling.* Part of your cares you give me with your crown.

*K. Rich.* Your cares set up do not pluck my cares down.  
My care is loss of care, by old care done;  
Your care is gain of care, by new care won:  
The cares I give I have, though given away;

They tend the crown, yet still with me they stay.

*Boling.* Are you contented to resign the crown? 200

*K. Rich.* Ay, no; no, ay; for I must nothing be;  
Therefore no no, for I resign to thee.

Now mark me, how I will undo myself:

I give this heavy weight from off my head

And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand,

The pride of kingly sway from out my heart;

With mine own tears I wash away my balm,

With mine own hands I give away my crown,

With mine own tongue deny my sacred state,

With mine own breath release all duty's rites: 210

All pomp and majesty I do forswear;

My manors, rents, revenues I forego;

My acts, decrees, and statutes I deny:

God pardon all oaths that are broke to me!

God keep all vows unbroke that swear to thee!

Make me, that nothing have, with nothing grieved,

And thou with all pleased, that hast all achieved!

Long mayst thou live in Richard's seat to sit,

And soon lie Richard in an earthy pit!

God save King Harry, unking'd Richard says, 220

And send him many years of sunshine days!

What more remains?

*North.* No more, but that you read

These accusations and these grievous crimes

Committed by your person and your followers

Against the state and profit of this land;

That, by confessing them, the souls of men

May deem that you are worthily deposed.

*K. Rich.* Must I do so? and must I ravel out

My weaved-up folly? Gentle Northumberland,

If thy offences were upon record, 230

Would it not shame thee in so fair a troop

To read a lecture of them? If thou wouldst,

There shouldst thou find one heinous article,

Containing the deposing of a king

And cracking the strong warrant of an oath,  
Mark'd with a blot, damn'd in the book of heaven:  
Nay, all of you that stand and look upon,  
Whilst that my wretchedness doth bait myself,  
Though some of you with Pilate wash your hands  
Showing an outward pity; yet you Pilates 240  
Have here deliver'd me to my sour cross,  
And water cannot wash away your sin.

*North.* My lord, dispatch; read o'er these articles.

*K. Rich.* Mine eyes are full of tears, I cannot see:  
And yet salt water blinds them not so much  
But they can see a sort of traitors here.  
Nay, if I turn mine eyes upon myself,  
I find myself a traitor with the rest;  
For I have given here my soul's consent  
To undeck the pompous body of a king; 250  
Made glory base and sovereignty a slave,  
Proud majesty a subject, state a peasant.

*North.* My lord,—

*K. Rich.* No lord of thine, thou haught insulting man,  
Nor no man's lord; I have no name, no title,  
No, not that name was given me at the font,  
But 'tis usurp'd: alack the heavy day,  
That I have worn so many winters out,  
And know not now what name to call myself!  
O that I were a mockery king of snow, 260  
Standing before the sun of Bolingbroke,  
To melt myself away in water-drops!  
Good king, great king, and yet not greatly good,  
An if my word be sterling yet in England,  
Let it command a mirror hither straight,  
That it may show me what a face I have,  
Since it is bankrupt of his majesty.

*Boling.* Go some of you and fetch a looking-glass.

[*Exit an Attendant.*]

*North.* Read o'er this paper while the glass doth come.

*K. Rich.* Fiend, thou torment'st me ere I come to hell!

*Boling.* Urge it no more, my Lord Northumberland.

*North.* The commons will not then be satisfied. 272

*K. Rich.* They shall be satisfied: I'll read enough,  
When I do see the very book indeed  
Where all my sins are writ, and that's myself.

*Re-enter Attendant, with a glass*

Give me the glass, and therein will I read.  
No deeper wrinkles yet? hath sorrow struck  
So many blows upon this face of mine,  
And made no deeper wounds? O flattering glass,  
Like to my followers in prosperity, 280  
Thou dost beguile me! Was this face the face  
That every day under his household roof  
Did keep ten thousand men? was this the face  
That, like the sun, did make beholders wink?  
Was this the face that faced so many follies,  
And was at last out-faced by Bolingbroke?  
A brittle glory shineth in this face:  
As brittle as the glory is the face;

*[Dashes the glass against the ground.]*

For there it is, crack'd in a hundred shivers.  
Mark, silent king, the moral of this sport, 290  
How soon my sorrow hath destroy'd my face.

*Boling.* The shadow of your sorrow hath destroy'd  
The shadow of your face.

*K. Rich.* Say that again.  
The shadow of my sorrow! ha! let's see:  
'Tis very true, my grief lies all within;  
And these external manners of laments  
Are merely shadows to the unseen grief  
That swells with silence in the tortured soul;  
There lies the substance: and I thank thee, king,  
For thy great bounty, that not only givest 300  
Me cause to wail but teachest me the way  
How to lament the cause. I'll beg one boon,  
And then be gone and trouble you no more.  
Shall I obtain it?

*Boling.* Name it, fair cousin.

*K. Rich.* 'Fair cousin?' I am greater than a king:  
For when I was a king, my flatterers  
Were then but subjects; being now a subject,  
I have a king here to my flatterer.  
Being so great, I have no need to beg.

*Boling.* Yet ask. 310

*K. Rich.* And shall I have?

*Boling.* You shall.

*K. Rich.* Then give me leave to go.

*Boling.* Whither?

*K. Rich.* Whither you will, so I were from your sights.

*Boling.* Go, some of you convey him to the Tower.

*K. Rich.* O, good! convey? conveyers are you all,  
That rise thus nimbly by a true king's fall.

[*Exeunt King Richard, some Lords, and a Guard.*]

*Boling.* On Wednesday next we solemnly set down  
Our coronation: lords, prepare yourselves. 320

[*Exeunt all except the Bishop of Carlisle, the Abbot  
of Westminster, and Aumerle.*]

*Abbot.* A woeful pageant have we here beheld.

*Car.* The woe's to come; the children yet unborn  
Shall feel this day as sharp to them as thorn.

*Aum.* You holy clergymen, is there no plot  
To rid the realm of this pernicious blot?

*Abbot.* My lord,  
Before I freely speak my mind herein,  
You shall not only take the sacrament  
To bury mine intents, but also to effect  
Whatever I shall happen to devise. 330

I see your brows are full of discontent,  
Your hearts of sorrow and your eyes of tears:  
Come home with me to supper; and I'll lay  
A plot shall show us all a merry day. [*Exeunt.*]

317. *conveyers.* A euphemism for "thieves" in current slang.

## ACT V

SCENE I. *London. A street leading to the Tower**Enter QUEEN and Ladies*

*Queen.* This way the king will come; this is the way  
To Julius Cæsar's ill-erected tower,  
To whose flint bosom my condemned lord  
Is doom'd a prisoner by proud Bolingbroke:  
Here let us rest, if this rebellious earth  
Have any resting for her true king's queen.

*Enter RICHARD and Guard*

But soft, but see, or rather do not see,  
My fair rose wither: yet look up, behold,  
That you in pity may dissolve to dew,  
And wash him fresh again with true-love tears. 10  
Ah, thou, the model where old Troy did stand,  
Thou map of honour, thou King Richard's tomb,  
And not King Richard; thou most beauteous inn,  
Why should hard-favoured grief be lodged in thee,  
When triumph is become an alehouse guest?

*K. Rich.* Join not with grief, fair woman, do not so,  
To make my end too sudden: learn, good soul,  
To think our former state a happy dream;  
From which awaked, the truth of what we are  
Shows us but this: I am sworn brother, sweet, 20  
To grim Necessity, and he and I  
Will keep a league till death. Hie thee to France  
And cloister thee in some religious house:  
Our holy lives must win a new world's crown,  
Which our profane hours here have stricken down.

2. *ill-erected*, built under bad auspices.

*Queen.* What, is my Richard both in shape and mind  
Transform'd and weaken'd? hath Bolingbroke deposed  
Thine intellect? hath he been in thy heart?  
The lion dying thrusteth forth his paw,  
And wounds the earth, if nothing else, with rage 30  
To be o'erpower'd; and wilt thou, pupil-like,  
Take thy correction mildly, kiss the rod,  
And fawn on rage with base humility,  
Which art a lion and a king of beasts?

*K. Rich.* A king of beasts, indeed; if aught but beasts,  
I had been still a happy king of men.  
Good sometime queen, prepare thee hence for France:  
Think I am dead and that even here thou takest,  
As from my death-bed, thy last living leave.  
In winter's tedious nights sit by the fire 40  
With good old folks and let them tell thee tales  
Of woeful ages long ago betid;  
And ere thou bid good night, to quit their griefs,  
Tell thou the lamentable tale of me  
And send the hearers weeping to their beds:  
For why, the senseless brands will sympathize  
The heavy accent of thy moving tongue  
And in compassion weep the fire out;  
And some will mourn in ashes, some coal-black,  
For the deposing of a rightful king. 50

*Enter NORTHUMBERLAND and others*

*North.* My lord, the mind of Bolingbroke is changed;  
You must to Pomfret, not unto the Tower.  
And, madam, there is order ta'en for you;  
With all swift speed you must away to France.

*K. Rich.* Northumberland, thou ladder wherewithal  
The mounting Bolingbroke ascends my throne,  
The time shall not be many hours of age  
More than it is ere foul sin gathering head  
Shall break into corruption: thou shalt think,

43. *to quit their griefs*, to cap their tragic tales.

52. *Pomfret*, Pontefract Castle in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

Though he divide the realm and give thee half, 60  
It is too little, helping him to all;  
And he shall think that thou, which know'st the way  
To plant unrightful kings, wilt know again,  
Being ne'er so little urged, another way  
To pluck him headlong from the usurped throne.  
The love of wicked men converts to fear;  
That fear to hate, and hate turns one or both  
To worthy danger and deserved death.

*North.* My guilt be on my head, and there an end.  
Take leave and part; for you must part forthwith. 70

*K. Rich.* Doubly divorced! Bad men, you violate  
A twofold marriage, 'twixt my crown and me,  
And then betwixt me and my married wife.  
Let me unkiss the oath 'twixt thee and me;  
And yet not so, for with a kiss 'twas made.  
Part us, Northumberland; I towards the north,  
Where shivering cold and sickness pines the clime;  
My wife to France: from whence, set forth in pomp,  
She came adorned hither like sweet May,  
Sent back like Hallowmas or short'st of day. 80

*Queen.* And must we be divided? must we part?

*K. Rich.* Ay, hand from hand, my love, and heart  
from heart.

*Queen.* Banish us both and send the king with me.

*North.* That were some love but little policy.

*Queen.* Then whither he goes, thither let me go.

*K. Rich.* So two, together weeping, make one woe.  
Weep thou for me in France, I for thee here;  
Better far off than near, be ne'er the near.

Go, count thy way with sighs; I mine with groans.

*Queen.* So longest way shall have the longest moans.

*K. Rich.* Twice for one step I'll groan, the way being  
short, 91

And piece the way out with a heavy heart.

Come, come, in wooing sorrow let's be brief,

Since, wedding it, there is such length in grief:

77. *pines*, causes to suffer.

80. *Hallowmas*, November 1st.



One kiss shall stop our mouths, and dumbly part;  
Thus give I mine, and thus take I thy heart.

*Queen.* Give me mine own again; 'twere no good part  
To take on me to keep and kill thy heart.  
So, now I have mine own again, be gone,  
That I may strive to kill it with a groan. 100

*K. Rich.* We make woe wanton with this fond delay:  
Once more, adieu; the rest let sorrow say. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The Duke of York's palace*

*Enter YORK and his DUCHESS*

*Duch.* My lord, you told me you would tell the rest,  
When weeping made you break the story off,  
Of our two cousins coming into London.

*York.* Where did I leave?

*Duch.* At that sad stop, my lord,  
Where rude misgovern'd hands from windows' tops  
Threw dust and rubbish on King Richard's head.

*York.* Then, as I said, the duke, great Bolingbroke,  
Mounted upon a hot and fiery steed  
Which his aspiring rider seem'd to know,  
With slow but stately pace kept on his course, 10  
Whilst all tongues cried 'God save thee, Bolingbroke!'  
You would have thought the very windows spake,  
So many greedy looks of young and old  
Through casements darted their desiring eyes  
Upon his visage, and that all the walls  
With painted imagery had said at once  
'Jesu preserve thee! welcome, Bolingbroke!'  
Whilst he, from the one side to the other turning,  
Bareheaded, lower than his proud steed's neck,  
Bespake them thus; 'I thank you, countrymen': 20  
And thus still doing, thus he pass'd along.

*Duch.* Alack, poor Richard! where rode he the  
whilst?

*York.* As in a theatre, the eyes of men,  
After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,  
Are idly bent on him that enters next,  
Thinking his prattle to be tedious;  
Even so, or with much more contempt, men's eyes  
Did scowl on gentle Richard; no man cried 'God save  
him!'

No joyful tongue gave him his welcome home:  
But dust was thrown upon his sacred head; 30  
Which with such gentle sorrow he shook off,  
His face still combating with tears and smiles,  
The badges of his grief and patience,  
That had not God, for some strong purpose, steel'd  
The hearts of men, they must perforce have melted  
And barbarism itself have pitied him.  
But heaven hath a hand in these events,  
To whose high will we bound our calm contents.  
To Bolingbroke are we sworn subjects now,  
Whose state and honour I for aye allow. 40

*Duch.* Here comes my son Aumerle.

*York.* Aumerle that was;  
But that is lost for being Richard's friend,  
And, madam, you must call him Rutland now:  
I am in parliament pledge for his truth  
And lasting fealty to the new made king.

*Enter AUMERLE*

*Duch.* Welcome, my son: who are the violets now  
That strew the green lap of the new come spring?

*Aum.* Madam, I know not, nor I greatly care not:  
God knows I had as lief be none as one.

*York.* Well, bear you well in this new spring of time, 50  
Lest you be cropp'd before you come to prime.  
What news from Oxford? hold those justs and triumphs?

*Aum.* For aught I know, my lord, they do.

*York.* You will be there, I know.

*Aum.* If God prevent not, I purpose so.

52. *justs*, tilting-matches.

*York.* What seal is that, that hangs without thy bosom?

Yea, look'st thou pale? let me see the writing.

*Aum.* My lord, 'tis nothing.

*York.* No matter, then, who see it:  
I will be satisfied; let me see the writing.

*Aum.* I do beseech your Grace to pardon me: 60  
It is a matter of small consequence,

Which for some reasons I would not have seen.

*York.* Which for some reasons, sir, I mean to see.  
I fear, I fear,—

*Duch.* What should you fear?  
'Tis nothing but some bond, that he has enter'd into  
For gay apparel 'gainst the triumph day.

*York.* Bound to himself! what doth he with a bond  
That he is bound to? Wife, thou art a fool.  
Boy, let me see the writing.

*Aum.* I do beseech you, pardon me; I may not show it.

*York.* I will be satisfied; let me see it, I say. 71

*[He plucks it out of his bosom and reads it.]*

Treason! foul treason! Villain! traitor! slave!

*Duch.* What is the matter, my lord?

*York.* Ho! who is within there?

*Enter a Servant*

Saddle my horse.

God for his mercy, what treachery is here!

*Duch.* Why, what is it, my lord?

*York.* Give me my boots, I say; saddle my horse.

*[Exit Servant.]*

Now, by mine honour, by my life, by my troth,  
I will appeach the villain.

*Duch.* What is the matter?

*York.* Peace, foolish woman. 80

*Duch.* I will not peace. What is the matter, Aumerle?

*Aum.* Good mother, be content; it is no more  
Than my poor life must answer.

*Duch.* Thy life answer!

*York.* Bring me my boots: I will unto the king.

*Re-enter Servant with boots*

*Duch.* Strike him, Aumerle. Poor boy, thou art amazed.

Hence, villain! never more come in my sight.

*York.* Give me my boots, I say.

*Duch.* Why, York, what wilt thou do?  
Wilt thou not hide the trespass of thine own?  
Have we more sons? or are we like to have? 90  
Is not my teeming date drunk up with time?  
And wilt thou pluck my fair son from mine age,  
And rob me of a happy mother's name?  
Is he not like thee? is he not thine own?

*York.* Thou fond mad woman,  
Wilt thou conceal this dark conspiracy?  
A dozen of them here have ta'en the sacrament,  
And interchangeably set down their hands,  
To kill the king at Oxford.

*Duch.* He shall be none;  
We'll keep him here: then what is that to him? 100

*York.* Away, fond woman! were he twenty times my  
son,  
I would appeach him.

*Duch.* Hadst thou groan'd for him  
As I have done, thou wouldst be more pitiful.  
But now I know thy mind; thou dost suspect  
That I have been disloyal.  
Sweet York, sweet husband, be not of that mind:  
He is as like thee as a man may be,  
Not like to me, or any of my kin,  
And yet I love him.

*York.* Make way, unruly woman! [*Exit.*

*Duch.* After, Aumerle! mount thee upon his horse;  
Spur post, and get before him to the king, 112  
And beg thy pardon ere he do accuse thee.  
I'll not be long behind; though I be old,

91. *teeming date*, period of child-bearing.

I doubt not but to ride as fast as York:  
And never will I rise up from the ground  
Till Bolingbroke have pardon'd thee. Away, be gone!  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *A royal palace*

*Enter BOLINGBROKE, PERCY, and other Lords*

*Boling.* Can no man tell me of my unthrifty son?  
'Tis full three months since I did see him last:  
If any plague hang over us, 'tis he.  
I would to God, my lords, he might be found:  
Inquire at London, 'mongst the taverns there,  
For there, they say, he daily doth frequent,  
With unrestrained loose companions,  
Even such, they say, as stand in narrow lanes,  
And beat our watch, and rob our passengers;  
Which he, young wanton and effeminate boy, 10  
Takes on the point of honour to support  
So dissolute a crew.

*Percy.* My lord, some two days since I saw the prince,  
And told him of those triumphs held at Oxford.

*Boling.* And what said the gallant?

*Percy.* His answer was, he would unto the streets,  
And from the common'st creature pluck a glove,  
And wear it as a favour; and with that  
He would unhorse the lustiest challenger.

*Boling.* As dissolute as desperate; yet through both 20  
I see some sparks of better hope, which elder years  
May happily bring forth. But who comes here?

*Enter AUMERLE*

*Aum.* Where is the king?

*Boling.* What means our cousin, that he stares and  
looks  
So wildly?

1. *unthrifty*, good-for-nothing.

*Aum.* God save your Grace! I do beseech your majesty,

To have some conference with your Grace alone.

*Boling.* Withdraw yourselves, and leave us here alone.

[*Exeunt Percy and Lords.*]

What is the matter with our cousin now?

*Aum.* For ever may my knees grow to the earth, 30  
My tongue cleave to my roof within my mouth,  
Unless a pardon ere I rise or speak.

*Boling.* Intended or committed was this fault?

If on the first, how heinous e'er it be,

To win thy after-love I pardon thee.

*Aum.* Then give me leave that I may turn the key,  
That no man enter till my tale be done.

*Boling.* Have thy desire.

*York.* [*Within.*] My liege, beware: look to thyself;  
Thou hast a traitor in thy presence there. 40

*Boling.* Villain, I'll make thee safe. [*Drawing.*]

*Aum.* Stay thy revengeful hand; thou hast no cause  
to fear.

*York.* [*Within.*] Open the door, secure, foolhardy king:  
Shall I for love speak treason to thy face?

Open the door, or I will break it open.

*Enter YORK*

*Boling.* What is the matter, uncle? speak;  
Recover breath; tell us how near is danger,  
That we may arm us to encounter it.

*York.* Peruse this writing here, and thou shalt kn  
The treason that my haste forbids me show.

*Aum.* Remember, as thou read'st, thy promise pass'd:  
I do repent me; read not my name there;  
My heart is not confederate with my hand.

*York.* It was, villain, ere thy hand did set it down.  
I tore it from the traitor's bosom, king;  
Fear, and not love, begets his penitence:

Forget to pity him, lest thy pity prove  
A serpent that will sting thee to the heart.

*Boling.* O heinous, strong and bold conspiracy!  
O loyal father of a treacherous son! 60  
Thou sheer, immaculate and silver fountain,  
From whence this stream through muddy passages  
Hath held his current and defiled himself!  
Thy overflow of good converts to bad,  
And thy abundant goodness shall excuse  
This deadly blot in thy digressing son.

*York.* So shall my virtue be his vice's nurse;  
And he shall spend mine honour with his shame,  
As thriftless sons their scraping fathers' gold.  
Mine honour lives when his dishonour dies, 70  
Or my shamed life in his dishonour lies:  
Thou kill'st me in his life; giving him breath,  
The traitor lives, the true man's put to death.

*Duch.* [*Within.*] What ho, my liege! for God's sake,  
let me in.

*Boling.* What shrill-voiced suppliant makes this eager  
cry?

*Duch.* A woman, and thy aunt, great king; 'tis I.  
Speak with me, pity me, open the door:  
A beggar begs that never begg'd before.

*Boling.* Our scene is alter'd from a serious thing,  
And now changed to 'The Beggar and the King'. 80  
My dangerous cousin, let your mother in:  
I know she is come to pray for your foul sin.

*York.* If thou do pardon, whosoever pray,  
More sins for this forgiveness prosper may.  
This fester'd joint cut off, the rest rest sound;  
This let alone will all the rest confound.

*Enter DUCHESS*

*Duch.* O king, believe not this hard-hearted man!  
Love loving not itself none other can. 88

80. *The Beggar and the King.* A reference to the ballad of *King Cophetua and the Beggar-maid*.

*York.* Thou frantic woman, what dost thou make here?

*Duch.* Sweet York, be patient. Hear me, gentle liege.  
[*Kneels.*

*Boling.* Rise up, good aunt.

*Duch.* Not yet, I thee beseech:  
For ever will I walk upon my knees,  
And never see day that the happy sees,  
Till thou give joy; until thou bid me joy,  
By pardoning Rutland, my transgressing boy.

*Aum.* Unto my mother's prayers I bend my knee.

*York.* Against them both my true joints bended be.  
Ill mayst thou thrive, if thou grant any grace!

*Duch.* Pleads he in earnest? look upon his face; 100  
His eyes do drop no tears, his prayers are in jest;  
His words come from his mouth, ours from our breast:  
He prays but faintly and would be denied;  
We pray with heart and soul and all beside:  
His weary joints would gladly rise, I know;  
Our knees shall kneel till to the ground they grow:  
His prayers are full of false hypocrisy;  
Ours of true zeal and deep integrity.  
Our prayers do out-pray his; then let them have  
That mercy which true prayer ought to have. 110

*Boling.* Good aunt, stand up.

*Duch.* Nay, do not say, 'stand up';  
Say 'pardon' first, and afterwards 'stand up'.  
An if I were thy nurse, thy tongue to teach,  
'Pardon' should be the first word of thy speech.  
I never long'd to hear a word till now;  
Say 'pardon', king; let pity teach thee how:  
The word is short, but not so short as sweet;  
No word like 'pardon' for kings' mouths so meet.

*York.* Speak it in French, king; say, 'pardonne moi'.

*Duch.* Dost thou teach pardon pardon to destroy? 120  
Ah, my sour husband, my hard-hearted lord,  
That set'st the word itself against the word!

119. *pardonne moi*, "excuse me", a polite way of declining a request.



Speak 'pardon' as 'tis current in our land;  
 The chopping French we do not understand.  
 Thine eye begins to speak; set thy tongue there;  
 Or in thy piteous heart plant thou thine ear;  
 That hearing how our plaints and prayers do pierce,  
 Pity may move thee 'pardon' to rehearse.

*Boling.* Good aunt, stand up.

*Duch.* I do not sue to stand;  
 Pardon is all the suit I have in hand. 130

*Boling.* I pardon him, as God shall pardon me.

*Duch.* O happy vantage of a kneeling knee!  
 Yet am I sick for fear: speak it again;  
 Twice saying 'pardon' doth not pardon twain,  
 But makes one pardon strong.

*Boling.* With all my heart  
 I pardon him.

*Duch.* A god on earth thou art.

*Boling.* But for our trusty brother-in-law and the abbot,  
 With all the rest of that consorted crew,  
 Destruction straight shall dog them at the heels.  
 Good uncle, help to order several powers 140  
 To Oxford, or where'er these traitors are:  
 They shall not live within this world, I swear,  
 But I will have them, if I once know where.  
 Uncle, farewell: and, cousin too, adieu:  
 Your mother well hath pray'd, and prove you true.

*Duch.* Come, my old son: I pray God make thee new.  
*[Exeunt.]*

#### SCENE IV. *The same*

*Enter* EXTON *and* Servant

*Exton.* Didst thou not mark the king, what words he  
 spake,

124. *chopping*, changing the meanings of words.

137. *our trusty brother-in-law*, John Holland, Duke of Exeter and  
 Earl of Huntingdon. 140. *several*, separate.

‘Have I no friend will rid me of this living fear?’  
Was it not so?

*Ser.* These were his very words.

*Exton.* ‘Have I no friend?’ quoth he: he spake it  
twice,

And urged it twice together, did he not?

*Ser.* He did.

*Exton.* And speaking it, he wistly look’d on me;  
As who should say, ‘I would thou wert the man  
That would divorce this terror from my heart’;  
Meaning the king at Pomfret. Come, let’s go: 10  
I am the king’s friend, and will rid his foe. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE V. *Pomfret castle*

*Enter KING RICHARD*

*K. Rich.* I have been studying how I may compare  
This prison where I live unto the world:  
And for because the world is populous  
And here is not a creature but myself,  
I cannot do it; yet I’ll hammer it out.  
My brain I’ll prove the female to my soul,  
My soul the father; and these two beget  
A generation of still-breeding thoughts,  
And these same thoughts people this little world,  
In humours like the people of this world, 10  
For no thought is contented. The better sort,  
As thoughts of things divine, are intermix’d  
With scruples and do set the word itself  
Against the word:  
As thus, ‘Come, little ones’, and then again,  
‘It is as hard to come as for a camel  
To thread the postern of a small needle’s eye’.  
Thoughts tending to ambition, they do plot

7. *wistly*, steadfastly.

8. *still-breeding*, ever increasing. 10. *humours*, whims, caprices.

Unlikely wonders; how these vain weak nails  
May tear a passage through the flinty ribs 20  
Of this hard world, my ragged prison walls,  
And, for they cannot, die in their own pride.  
Thoughts tending to content flatter themselves  
That they are not the first of fortune's slaves,  
Nor shall not be the last; like silly beggars  
Who sitting in the stocks refuge their shame,  
That many have and others must sit there;  
And in this thought they find a kind of ease,  
Bearing their own misfortunes on the back  
Of such as have before endured the like. 30  
Thus play I in one person many people,  
And none contented: sometimes am I king;  
Then treasons make me wish myself a beggar,  
And so I am: then crushing penury  
Persuades me I was better when a king;  
Then I am king'd again: and by and by  
Think that I am unking'd by Bolingbroke,  
And straight am nothing: but whate'er I be,  
Nor I nor any man that but man is  
With nothing shall be pleased, till he be eased 40  
With being nothing. Music do I hear? [Music.  
Ha, ha! keep time: how sour sweet music is,  
When time is broke and no proportion kept!  
So is it in the music of men's lives.  
And here have I the daintiness of ear  
To check time broke in a disorder'd string;  
But for the concord of my state and time  
Had not an ear to hear my true time broke.  
I wasted time, and now doth time waste me;  
For now hath time made me his numbering clock: 50  
My thoughts are minutes; and with sighs they jar  
Their watches on unto mine eyes, the outward watch,  
Whereto my finger, like a dial's point,  
Is pointing still, in cleansing them from tears.

51. *jar their watches*, etc. They indicate, as by the ticking of a clock, the intervals of time as one succeeds another.

Now sir, the sound that tells what hour it is  
Are clamorous groans, which strike upon my heart,  
Which is the bell: so sighs and tears and groans  
Show minutes, times, and hours: but my time  
Runs posting on in Bolingbroke's proud joy,  
While I stand fooling here, his Jack o' the clock. 60  
This music mads me; let it sound no more;  
For though it have help madmen to their wits,  
In me it seems it will make wise men mad.  
Yet blessing on his heart that gives it me!  
For 'tis a sign of love; and love to Richard  
Is a strange brooch in this all-hating world.

*Enter a Groom of the Stable*

*Groom.* Hail, royal prince!

*K. Rich.* Thanks, noble peer;  
The cheapest of us is ten groats too dear.  
What art thou? and how comest thou hither,  
Where no man never comes but that sad dog 70  
That brings me food to make misfortune live?

*Groom.* I was a poor groom of thy stable, king,  
When thou wert king; who, travelling towards York,  
With much ado at length have gotten leave  
To look upon my sometimes royal master's face.  
O, how it yearn'd my heart when I beheld  
In London streets, that coronation-day,  
When Bolingbroke rode on roan Barbary,  
That horse that thou so often hast bestrid,  
That horse that I so carefully have dress'd! 80

*K. Rich.* Rode he on Barbary? Tell me, gentle friend,  
How went he under him?

*Groom.* So proudly as if he disdain'd the ground.

60. *Jack o' the clock*, an automatic metal figure, frequent in old clocks, made to strike the bell with a hammer at the hour or quarters.

66. *brooch*. In Elizabethan times this word was used for any jewel or ornament; so here it signifies "gem".

68. A pun. A "royal" or "rial" was worth ten shillings, a "noble" was worth 6s. 8d., i.e. ten groats less, a groat being worth 4d.

76. *yearn'd*, grieved.

*K. Rich.* So proud that Bolingbroke was on his back!  
That jade hath eat bread from my royal hand;  
This hand hath made him proud with clapping him.  
Would he not stumble? would he not fall down,  
Since pride must have a fall, and break the neck  
Of that proud man that did usurp his back?  
Forgivenesss, horse! why do I rail on thee, 90  
Since thou, created to be awed by man,  
Wast born to bear? I was not made a horse;  
And yet I bear a burthen like an ass,  
Spurr'd, gall'd and tired by jauncing Bolingbroke.

*Enter Keeper, with a dish*

*Keep.* Fellow, give place; here is no longer stay.

*K. Rich.* If thou love me, 'tis time thou wert away.

*Groom.* What my tongue dares not, that my heart  
shall say. [Exit.

*Keep.* My lord, will't please you to fall to?

*K. Rich.* Taste of it first, as thou art wont to do. 99

*Keep.* My lord, I dare not: Sir Pierce of Exton, who  
lately came from the king, commands the contrary.

*K. Rich.* The devil take Henry of Lancaster and thee!  
Patience is stale, and I am weary of it. [Beats the Keeper.

*Keep.* Help, help, help!

*Enter EXTON and Servants, armed*

*K. Rich.* How now! what means death in this rude  
assault?

Villain, thy own hand yields thy death's instrument.

[Snatching an axe from a Servant and killing him.

Go thou, and fill another room in hell.

[He kills another. Then Exton strikes him down.

That hand shall burn in never-quenching fire 109

That staggers thus my person. Exton, thy fierce hand  
Hath with the king's blood stain'd the king's own land.

Mount, mount, my soul! thy seat is up on high;

Whilst my gross flesh sinks downward, here to die. [Dies.

94. *jauncing.* To jaunce a horse was to fatigue it by irritating it.

*Exton.* As full of valour as of royal blood:  
Both have I spill'd; O would the deed were good!  
For now the devil, that told me I did well,  
Says that this deed is chronicled in hell.  
This dead king to the living king I'll bear:  
Take hence the rest, and give them burial here. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *Windsor castle*

*Flourish.* Enter BOLINGBROKE, YORK, with other Lords,  
and Attendants

*Boling.* Kind uncle York, the latest news we hear  
Is that the rebels have consumed with fire  
Our town of Cicester in Gloucestershire;  
But whether they be ta'en or slain we hear not.

*Enter* NORTHUMBERLAND

Welcome, my lord: what is the news?

*North.* First, to thy sacred state wish I all happiness.  
The next news is, I have to London sent  
The heads of Salisbury, Spencer, Blunt, and Kent:  
The manner of their taking may appear  
At large discoursed in this paper here. 10

*Boling.* We thank thee, gentle Percy, for thy pains;  
And to thy worth will add right worthy gains.

*Enter* FITZWATER

*Fitz.* My lord, I have from Oxford sent to London  
The heads of Brocas and Sir Bennet Seely,  
Two of the dangerous consorted traitors  
That sought at Oxford thy dire overthrow.

*Boling.* Thy pains, Fitzwater, shall not be forgot;  
Right noble is thy merit, well I wot.

*Enter* PERCY, and the BISHOP OF CARLISLE

*Percy.* The grand conspirator, Abbot of Westminster,  
With clog of conscience and sour melancholy 20



## APPENDICES

### I. SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE AND WORKS

#### (1) LIFE

About the life of Shakespeare very little is known. Many of the books written on the subject have the outward appearance of being full-length biographies; but appearances are deceptive. They attain their bulk by admitting discussions on all sorts of subjects which, strictly speaking, should not be included in a biography, and by erecting a large superstructure of conjecture on a small foundation of fact. In Shakespeare's day the art of biography was in its infancy; the first sketch of his life was written (and that in rather an amateurish way) ninety-three years after his death. Most of the information we possess about him has been gleaned from old documents by the patient toil of scholars, and deals, as such information is wont to do, with money affairs and legal transactions. These records tell us far more about the man of business than they do about the poet and dramatist. Little as we know, however, about Shakespeare, we know far less about some of his contemporaries. About John Webster, one of the most eminent of Shakespeare's successors, we know hardly anything, except that he was a freeman of the Merchant Taylors Company. About John Ford, an eminent dramatist twenty years younger than Shakespeare, almost all we know is that he wore "a melancholy hat".

William Shakespeare was born at Stratford-on-Avon late in April, 1564. His father, John Shakespeare, was a glover, a dealer in corn and timber, and probably also a butcher. His mother, Mary Arden, was an heiress in



a small way. During Shakespeare's childhood John Shakespeare's affairs prospered; he was high-bailiff (mayor) of Stratford in 1568. Afterwards he was much less prosperous. It can hardly be doubted that Shakespeare was educated at the free grammar-school at Stratford, where he learnt to read Latin with ease and pleasure and to take a special delight in the poems of Ovid. It is uncertain how Shakespeare occupied himself after he left school. One tradition, rather better supported than most, asserts that he was a schoolmaster in the country; if so his education must have been above, or certainly not below, the average.

When he was eighteen-and-a-half years old Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway, who was eight years his senior. His daughter Susanna was born in 1583 and the twins Hamnet and Judith in 1585. The boy Hamnet died when he was eleven years old. At some unknown date, probably in the autumn of 1585, Shakespeare left Stratford-on-Avon for London.

It is not known how Shakespeare's connexion with the stage began, but we do know that he was a member of one company of actors throughout all his career. This company, known successively as "the Earl of Derby's men", "the Lord Chamberlain's men", and, finally, after the accession of James, "the King's Servants", came to be recognized as the leading theatrical company of the day. As an actor, Shakespeare never played important rôles; he seems to have had a liking for playing old men's parts—Adam in *As You Like It*, the Ghost in *Hamlet*, and Old Knowell in Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*. He soon began to show that he could write and produce plays better than he could act. The substantial fortune which he eventually made was, however, derived from the share which he acquired in the ownership of the Globe and Blackfriars Theatres, not from his author's fees; though, of course, his plays did much to increase the prosperity and popularity of the theatres of which he was part-owner.

In 1592 Robert Greene, a disreputable graduate of Cambridge and a playwright, when dying a miserable death, attacked Shakespeare in a pamphlet and called him "an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers", sneering at him as a Jack of All Trades, who, not content with acting, deprived University men of their livelihood by writing plays as well. This is the earliest reference, as far as we know, to Shakespeare as an author. Henry Chettle, another playwright, who saw Greene's pamphlet through the press, apologized for having allowed this offensive passage to appear, and spoke of Shakespeare's civil demeanour, excellence as an actor and uprightness of dealing, and of the polished grace of his writings.

In 1593 Shakespeare published his poem *Venus and Adonis*, and in the following year *Lucrece*. Both poems were dedicated to the young Earl of Southampton. These two small volumes were the only writings whose publication was sanctioned by Shakespeare himself.

By 1597 there are manifest signs of Shakespeare's increasing prosperity. In that year he bought New Place, the "big house" in Stratford. In the previous year he had applied for a grant of arms; already he may have cherished the idea of ultimately leaving London and settling down at home as a country gentleman.

In 1598 a certain Francis Meres, a country parson of literary tastes, published a small book called *Palladis Tamia or Wit's Treasury* in which he claimed that Shakespeare was the most excellent of our writers for the stage, both in comedy and tragedy. He went on to enumerate twelve of Shakespeare's plays, six comedies and six tragedies (four of the latter we would classify as histories). This is a great help in dating the plays, as it proves beyond question that twelve of them were written before 1598.

In 1599 the Globe Theatre was built on Bankside, and Shakespeare was made a partner in Burbage's

company. Purchases of land and tithes at Stratford attest his ever-growing prosperity and his provident care for the future.

In or about 1611 (the year of the Authorized Version of the Bible) Shakespeare felt that he could realize his dreams and retired from London to Stratford. He revisited London at times, however, and bought property there in 1613. On 29th June, 1613, the Globe Theatre was burnt down during an early if not the first performance of *Henry VIII*, and it is probable that many of Shakespeare's manuscripts were destroyed.

In the early spring of 1616 Shakespeare's health began to fail; he executed his will on 25th March and died at New Place on 23rd April, 1616.

## (2) THE POEMS

Soon after he discovered that he could write, Shakespeare made a bid for fame as a poet with *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*. At that time a writer of plays had no standing whatever as a man of letters; a poet, especially if he secured the patronage of a distinguished nobleman, had some chance of acquiring a literary reputation. Both poems became widely popular, but, had Shakespeare written nothing else, they would be read to-day only by a few literary specialists. The collection of poems known as *The Passionate Pilgrim*, published in 1599, was a dishonest publication which contains little of Shakespeare's work, but proves that, even at this early date, an unscrupulous publisher considered that Shakespeare's name had some selling value on a title-page. Shakespeare's *Sonnets* were also published dishonestly ten years later; they were probably written from time to time throughout a number of years and circulated in manuscript among his friends. They are magnificent poetry, and it is best to read them as such and not attempt to reconstruct Shakespeare's personal experiences from them. *A Lover's Complaint* was pub-

lished along with the *Sonnets*, but is almost certainly not by Shakespeare. Shakespeare also contributed a rather obscure short poem, *The Phoenix and the Turtle*, to a quaint little anthology published in 1601.

### (3) THE PLAYS

The discovery of the approximate order in which Shakespeare wrote his plays is perhaps the greatest contribution of the nineteenth century to Shakespearean scholarship. It is possible now to trace the development of his mind and art. Though he is so surpassingly great, he developed much as an ordinary man does; indeed in some ways he was slow in developing.

Shakespeare began by writing historical plays, a type of play made popular by the wave of patriotism and national self-consciousness which swept over the country after the defeat of the Armada in 1588. The three parts of *Henry VI*, which display immature work and perhaps the work of several hands, were followed by *Richard III*, a superb melodrama with a first-rate part for Burbage, the most celebrated actor of the time. Shakespeare had read the Latin comic dramatist Plautus at school and, possibly, with his pupils if he was a "schoolmaster in the country"; in *The Comedy of Errors* he imitated Plautus and produced an excellent if somewhat mechanical farce, with a serious background of his own. In *Titus Andronicus* he turned for a model to the Latin writer Seneca, whose ten tragedies, though almost entirely worthless, were considered to be models of what a tragedy should be. The result is a crude and brutal play, which many critics deny to be Shakespeare's. *The Taming of the Shrew* is a rough and boisterous comedy which Shakespeare based upon an extremely clever but unduly short play of unknown authorship. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* Shakespeare first attempted a comedy of the romantic type which he was to make his own. It has many of the ingredients of the later comedies,

but no skill is shown in compounding them. It is not a great performance, but is rich in promise of better things. *Love's Labour's Lost* has all the signs of having been written for a private performance before a select audience. It is full of topical allusions which we cannot understand. Its plot, which is slight but sufficient to keep the play moving on the stage, was, for once in a way, Shakespeare's own invention.

Shakespeare now began to aim higher, and wrote three lyrical plays, one of each kind (tragedy, history and comedy), each of which marks a great advance on its predecessors in each kind. *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard II* and *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* are not only great plays but great poems. In the *Dream* there is a happy combination of humour, fancy and poetry which can only be paralleled in other works of Shakespeare, and which is entirely his own. In *King John* Shakespeare reverted to history and dressed up an old play to look like new; it is a clever piece of adaptation but not a great play. When writing *The Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare took two or three plots which were in themselves neither credible nor interesting, and wove them into a brilliant play which is still superb on the stage. The least of critics can point out flaws and faults in this play, but only the greatest of dramatists could have written it. *King Henry IV, Parts I and II*, really one play in ten acts, is a masterly combination of history and comedy; the two ingredients do not merely blend harmoniously; each actually enhances the value of the other. *Much Ado About Nothing* is a charming comedy with more than a trace of melodrama in it; its main plot, in fact, has become a subsidiary interest, as the underplot has swamped it. It was followed by *Henry V*, the last of the historical plays (*Henry VIII* is more pageant than play). It is an epic rather than a drama, and contains some splendid pieces of patriotic writing.

In *Julius Caesar* Shakespeare broke new ground and wrote a tragedy based on his favourite book, Plutarch's

*Lives*. It forms a kind of transition between the histories and the tragedies; it is a much less painful play than most of the tragedies which followed it. Two masterly comedies followed, the pastoral play *As You Like It* and the even more charming *Twelfth Night*, in which Shakespeare repeats several of his favourite comic devices, but treats them with a firmer and more mature hand.

In *Hamlet* Shakespeare transformed a crude melodrama into a tragic masterpiece, which has proved to be his most popular play. It is, in its final form, too long a play to be acted without severe cutting; and there is every indication that Shakespeare wrote much of it to satisfy himself, not to please the Globe audience, though he succeeded to perfection in doing that as well.

The delightful prose comedy of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is a sort of postscript to the *Henry IV* series of plays, as it was written in a fortnight in obedience to a command of Queen Elizabeth. It was followed by three rather bitter comedies: *Troilus and Cressida*, an odd play which was probably not produced at the Globe; *All's Well that Ends Well*, which may have been written by Shakespeare in his early days and revised later; and *Measure for Measure*, the best of the three, but an unpleasant mirthless comedy.

Shakespeare's next play was probably *Othello*, the most painful as well as the most perfectly constructed of his tragedies. It was followed by *King Lear*, the most sublime of all the plays; *Lear* was followed by *Macbeth*, which is perhaps the most thrilling and horror-inspiring of the great tragedies.

In *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus* Shakespeare returned to Plutarch and the Roman world. In the former play he unfolded a vast historical panorama with incomparable skill; in *Coriolanus* he wrote a tragedy which is much less tragic than its predecessors, as, though the hero dies, he redeems himself before death.

There is something wrong with *Timon of Athens*,

though we cannot say whether the play as we have it is a first draft, or whether it contains the work of another dramatist. Parts of it are as magnificent as some of the speeches in *Lear*, but it is not a well-constructed whole.

The four plays with which Shakespeare ended his career as dramatist stand apart from the earlier comedies and are usually called "Romances". There is a strong element of the fairy-tale about them. In *Pericles* Shakespeare added three acts written in his best vein to two acts of unadulterated trash written by some unknown hack. *Cymbeline* is notable for the beautiful figure of Imogen; *The Winter's Tale* for its pastoral poetry and the remarkable scene where the statue comes to life. But the greatest of the four romances is *The Tempest*, Shakespeare's farewell to the stage. Into it he introduced the fairy element which had given such charm to *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*; but he handled it with even greater skill and mastery. *Othello*, *Lear* and *Hamlet* are perhaps greater plays than *The Tempest*, but no play shows more clearly than this his last the essential spirit of Shakespeare.

Shakespeare collaborated with Fletcher to write *Henry VIII*, a play which depends for its success more upon pageantry and declamation than upon plot and poetry. They probably collaborated also in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, a dramatization of Chaucer's *Knights Tale*. Many other plays have from time to time been attributed to Shakespeare for reasons good, bad and indifferent. None of these plays is Shakespeare's work in its entirety. The play of *Sir Thomas More* is of interest because its original manuscript is preserved in the British Museum, and is believed to contain a fairly long addition (147 lines) in Shakespeare's handwriting.

#### (4) THE QUARTOS AND FOLIOS

Seventeen of Shakespeare's plays (including *Pericles*) were printed in quarto between 1597 and 1622. Four of

the plays so published were printed in a more or less garbled version (*Romeo and Juliet*, *Henry V*, *Merry Wives* and *Hamlet*), and it is not likely that Shakespeare authorized, though he may not have objected to, the publication of any of them. These quartos were, of course, small slim books, and were sold for sixpence. In 1623 appeared the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays, a bulky volume known as the First Folio. It was edited by Shakespeare's fellow actors, John Heminge, who managed the financial affairs of the Globe, and Henry Condell, its principal comedian. It contains thirty-six plays (all the accepted plays except *Pericles*), twenty of which appeared in print for the first time. It does not, of course, contain any of the poems. Over 180 copies of the First Folio survive, but only fourteen are what is known among book-collectors as "perfect". Other Folios were published in 1632, 1663 and 1685.

It is almost certain that most of the first quartos were set up from the prompt-book, which may have been in Shakespeare's own handwriting or have been a copy made by the prompter. Later quartos were usually set up from one of the earlier ones. The Folio editors sent to the printer a quarto (usually the latest) if one was available; if there was no quarto they sent the prompter's copy, which by this time was certainly not in Shakespeare's writing, as prompt-copies come in for rough handling; it may have been a copy of a copy of a copy of it. Speaking generally, the quartos can be depended upon to give us what Shakespeare wrote more exactly than the Folio; for twenty plays, of course, the Folio is the sole authority.

## II. SHAKESPEARE'S THEATRE

A small boy of my acquaintance at the age of seven or thereabouts used to write plays of a highly sensational and violent kind, dealing with the adventures and misadventures of persons of the most exalted rank. A



typical piece of his dialogue might have run as follows:

*The Duchess.* Alas! I am murdered!

*The Duke.* Who has done this foul deed?

*The Duchess.* Woe is me, I cannot say.

Having completed his drama and thought it over, the young author decided that his plot was more suitable for a novel than for a play, so he proceeded to alter his work by a simple method, thus:

"Alas! I am murdered", said the Duchess.

"Who has done this foul deed", said the Duke.

"Woe is me, I cannot say", said the Duchess.

And so on.

It was not long before he discovered that the differences between a book and a play were rather more fundamental than he had supposed. But other writers of greater age and experience have fallen into the mistake of not distinguishing between a book which is written to be read and a play which is written to be acted. The great Dr. Johnson, for example, says in his oracular manner "A dramattick exhibition is a book recited with concomitants that increase or diminish its effects"—a thoroughly unsatisfactory definition.

When we see a Gilbert and Sullivan opera we are sometimes tempted to spend an extra shilling and carry the book of words home as a souvenir. I wonder how many of us treasure these little books, with their familiar grey-blue paper covers! When we read them (and they are uncommonly good reading), even though it is months or even years since we bought them, the printed page recalls to our mind, in the most vivid manner, the stage, the scenery, the music, and the gestures and dresses of the players. We ought to read Shakespeare in this way too.

It is, however, easy to fall into the error of regarding Shakespeare as a writer of books, and to forget that he wrote for the theatre, and that he did not see any of his writings through the press himself, except his two poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*. Whether he would,

had he lived longer, have brought out a collected edition of his plays, is a point which cannot be settled, though his actor-friends Heminge and Condell, who did bring out such an edition seven years after his death, imply that he might have done so. His friendly rival Ben Jonson issued a volume of his own plays in the year in which Shakespeare died, and was ridiculed for so doing, as if he were vainly attempting to ensure permanence in print for what was essentially a short-lived form of entertainment. Shakespeare's plays were written to be acted; it is likely that their author, in his early days at any rate, never thought of printing them, any more than he thought of walking on to the stage of the Globe and reciting *Venus and Adonis* with appropriate gestures. He certainly never anticipated that they would be studied under the microscope and read syllable by syllable by men of learning.

Not only were the plays written to be acted, but they were written to be acted by a special company of actors, whom Shakespeare knew intimately, and to be produced upon a stage which differed in many important respects from the stage of to-day. To understand and appreciate the plays aright, it is essential to know something about the Elizabethan theatre. Though some of the details of its construction are matters of dispute, there is no doubt about the general lay-out of an Elizabethan theatre; the uncertain details may well be left to the experts to settle; they are of slight importance to the reader of Shakespeare.

Two points should be noted at the outset. First, it is probable that no two theatres were exactly the same in every detail, though all were alike in being rather rough-and-ready structures by modern standards. Secondly, it is certain that during Shakespeare's active career considerable developments took place in the presentation of plays. It is not safe to assume that a play produced in, say, 1610 was produced in a manner similar to a play of 1590.

The first building specially erected for use as a theatre was built in 1576, when Shakespeare was a boy of twelve. It was called The Theatre. Another was built later in the same year, and named The Curtain, not because of its own curtain (for, as we shall see, the curtain was a very minor feature of the Elizabethan stage) but because it was built on a piece of ground known as the Curtain, a technical term used by military engineers for the plain wall of a fortified place. This was followed by The Rose in 1587, The Swan in 1595, Shakespeare's own theatre The Globe in 1599 (made of the materials of The Theatre, which was pulled down in a manner disturbing to the public peace), The Fortune in 1599, The Red Bull about 1605, and The Hope in 1613. These eight theatres, crude as they were, were objects of pride to many Londoners, and of admiration to most foreigners, for there was nothing like them to be seen on the Continent.

Plays used to be acted in inn-yards, and the early theatres were like inn-yards without the inn. Outside they were round or six-sided in shape; the interior was round. The audience either stood on the ground, with no protection from sun or rain, or paid a higher price and sat in one of the three galleries, which were protected by a thatched roof. Some of the audience, especially young men of fashion, hired stools and sat on the stage itself. The stage projected far into the audience, so that the actors were seen from three sides, indeed from four sides, for sometimes the audience occupied the gallery at the back of the stage. The modern stage has the effect of a *picture*, which is framed by the proscenium arch, and which can be concealed by the lowering of the curtain. The Elizabethan stage had the effect of displaying groups of living *statues*, and the main stage could not be concealed by a curtain. The effect of the audience almost surrounding the actors was to make it much easier for the actors to keep in touch with the audience. A competent Elizabethan actor could grip

his audience in a way that can only be done to-day by a music-hall artist of genius. Asides and soliloquies, which seem not a little absurd on the modern stage, seemed quite appropriate on the projecting stage, where no footlights separated actor and audience.

The effect of the absence of curtain was to make it essential for the dramatist to manœuvre his characters on and off the stage with great skill. At the end of a tragedy, for instance, some provision had to be made for the removal of the dead bodies from the stage. The dead men could not get up, in full sight of the audience, and walk off. Therefore the tragedies usually end with a few quiet lines, often spoken by minor characters, instead of ending with a climax, as many modern plays do.

Plays usually were performed from about three o'clock to about five o'clock in the afternoon—earlier when the days were shorter. There was no means of darkening the theatre, so that the performance always took place in broad daylight. The dramatist had, therefore, to rely entirely on his words to produce the illusion of night and darkness on the stage. With what magic Shakespeare has performed this task may be seen time and again in many of his plays; it is especially noticeable in *Macbeth* and in *Julius Cæsar*.

At the back of the stage was the tiring-room, where the actors dressed, and where they awaited their cue to appear. The gallery at the back of the stage was often used to represent the upper storey of any building—it was Juliet's balcony, the walls of a beleaguered town, and so on. Under this balcony there was a corridor, known now as the inner or rear stage, which could be concealed by means of a small curtain. This inner stage served many purposes: it was Prospero's cell in *The Tempest*, the Capulets' tomb in *Romeo and Juliet*, and Desdemona's bed-chamber in *Othello*. Behind its curtain was concealed the supposed statue of Hermione in *The Winter's Tale*. On it was performed the play, *The*

*Murder of Gonzago*, with which Hamlet tested his uncle's guilt. There was also a place below the stage, whence the Ghost in *Hamlet* spoke, and where the orchestra played mysterious music in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act IV, Sc. 3. In the floor of the stage was a trap-door by which ghosts and others ascended and descended. This probably also represented such things as Ophelia's grave in the last act of *Hamlet*.

Perhaps the most astonishing feature to us of the Elizabethan stage is the fact that there were no actresses. All the women's parts were taken by boys. But it may be doubted whether this seemed a peculiar arrangement to Shakespeare. He never considered anything else possible. The boys were, of course, highly trained; they were not in the least self-conscious, and had no ambition to secure more attention than was their due. They would do what they were told. To us it seems almost fantastic that parts such as those of Cleopatra, Lady Macbeth and Desdemona should have been written for boy-actors; but there is no reason to believe that these parts suffered through the embargo on women-players. The traveller Thomas Coryate, when at Venice, "saw women act, a thing I never saw before, and they performed it with as good a grace as ever I saw any masculine actor". The wonder was, in his opinion, that they were as good as the men. Actresses did not appear on the public stage in England until after the Restoration.

Broadly speaking, there was no scenery on Shakespeare's stage, or next to none. There were properties, however—such things as a bed, a well, an altar and so on. When these properties were not wanted, they were sometimes but by no means always removed; often their presence was ignored by actors and audience alike. Many scenes have been assigned a definite locality by later editors; as a matter of fact they were regarded by Shakespeare and his audience as just taking place "somewhere". The absence of scenery and of intervals

between so-called scenes enabled the plays to be acted with great rapidity, and that is how they should be acted if they are to be seen to the greatest advantage. There were, however, short intervals between the Acts, during which music was often played.

The actors dressed with great pomp and elaboration; dress was by far the most expensive item in the cost of producing a play. The costumes were made of really good and costly materials, not mere shoddy stuff which looked well at a distance. A cloak cost as much as £20, which represents many times that sum to-day. But no attempt was made to dress the characters in costumes such as were actually worn in the days when the events portrayed were supposed to have taken place or in the country where the scene was set. The actors simply wore extravagantly rich costumes of their own day and country.

Allowing for the difference in the purchasing power of money, the prices in the Elizabethan theatre were much the same as the prices of seats to-day. In the public theatres, the prices ranged from 1*d.* to 1*s.*, a penny for standing-room in the "pit", a shilling for a seat in the best part of one of the balconies. In the so-called "private" theatres, the prices ranged from 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* These private theatres differed in some respects from the public theatres; they were roofed over, so that performances could take place by artificial light, and in winter-time; they did not hold so many people; and their higher prices made their audiences rather more select. Shakespeare's company took over a theatre of this kind at Blackfriars in 1608.

Towards the end of Shakespeare's career the public stage was influenced by the development of the masque, an elaborate and expensive form of entertainment in which King James delighted. The central feature of the masque was a dance by a number of noble lords and ladies, but this dance was often preceded by a kind of playlet in which professional actors took part, and by

most elaborate stage effects, some of which resembled the transformation scene in a modern pantomime. The difference between the simple stage effects of, say, *The Merchant of Venice* and the more elaborate effects of *The Tempest* is due in part to the influence of the masque; in part, no doubt, it is due to developments in play production that would naturally take place in fifteen years, between 1596 and 1611.

During most of Shakespeare's active career as a dramatist the stage was rather crude, but its crudity was not entirely a drawback. It stimulated the audience to use its imagination; and the use of imagination at one point quickens it at other points, and so is positively an all-round gain. Conversely, realism on the stage often blunts the imagination, and so defeats its own object. It arouses in the audience a critical sense which it cannot satisfy. Shakespeare's stage depended for its illusion upon the poetry of the dramatist, not upon the tricks of the scene-painter or the stage-carpenter. The plays gained much from being performed rapidly, with no interruptions. Audience and actors were on friendly terms with each other, as they were in far closer contact than they are in in the theatre of to-day. The actors were coached by the dramatist himself, and when that dramatist was Shakespeare, he insisted, gently but firmly, that things should be done as he wanted them. Comic scenes never degenerated into ragging, nor tragic scenes into ranting. The boys who acted women's parts were not tempted to "steal the play". Throughout his whole career Shakespeare showed himself completely at home in the theatre, which was his full-time job; in this he differed from University men like Greene and Peele, who wrote plays, rather disdainfully, because no other means of making money was open to them.

By far the best way of learning to appreciate the greatness of Shakespeare as a dramatist is to act one of his plays, in whole or part. Even if the performance has to be rather a makeshift affair, with no scenery, no

properties and no special costumes, it can be immensely instructive as well as amusing. To act in a play of Shakespeare is the equivalent of reading a dozen books on his art and stagecraft.

### III. WHEN SHAKESPEARE WROTE

#### *KING RICHARD II*

*King Richard II* was one of the first plays of Shakespeare's to be printed, as a quarto edition of it appeared in the autumn of 1597. It is not quite clear how long it had existed in manuscript before it was published; but there are some indications that it was written early in 1595. Samuel Daniel, the poet, published his long poem *The Civil Wars between the two houses of Lancaster and York* very early in that year. Shakespeare had evidently read this poem before completing his play. Moreover, on 9th December, 1595, a play on the subject of Richard II—almost certainly Shakespeare's play—was performed at the house of the courtier Sir Edward Hoby, in Canon Row, Westminster. The style and general tone of the play are fully in accordance with the date 1595. *Richard II* is written in a new style; it is much more lyrical than the earlier *Richard III*; and, when writing it, Shakespeare experimented, for the first and almost the last time, in discarding almost entirely the use of prose. The verse of *Richard II* is that of Shakespeare's early but not his earliest period; it is dignified and sonorous, but lacks the ease of the blank verse of *Julius Cæsar* and *Hamlet*. The concentration of interest on the two figures, Richard and Bolingbroke, is another indication of early work. The next play in the series, *Henry IV, Part I*, unfolds a more varied panorama and displays a firmer touch.



IV. THE BOOK WHICH INSPIRED SHAKESPEARE TO WRITE *KING RICHARD II*

Shakespeare based all his English historical plays upon the *Chronicle* of Raphael Holinshed. This work appeared in two folio volumes, well illustrated, in 1578; a revised edition, without illustrations, appeared in 1586. About its editor, Holinshed, not much is known. He is believed to have belonged to a Cheshire family, to have been educated at Cambridge, and to have been "a minister of God's word". He is known to have been employed in the printing-house of a German, Reginald Wolfe. Wolfe, who had the Teutonic taste for voluminous compilations, projected a universal history and cosmography, but died after working at this book for twenty-five years. Holinshed had assisted him in his labours, and after his death was chosen to edit his papers, in a less ambitious but more manageable form. Instead of a universal history, the book was to be a history of the British Isles. Holinshed was an industrious but somewhat credulous historian; Shakespeare took from him just what he needed, but had no hesitation about altering his material for the sake of dramatic effect. Sometimes Shakespeare, when he was not particularly interested in a scene, which, nevertheless, was essential to the development of the play, saved himself trouble by simply versifying what Holinshed wrote.

*Richard II* adheres very closely to the account given by Holinshed of the events of the last two years of Richard's life, but Shakespeare has contrived to transmute the chronicler's somewhat humdrum narrative into magnificent poetry and engrossing drama. He has also added several scenes and speeches of his own invention, amongst them the death-bed scene of John of Gaunt, the garden scene at Langley, the deposition scene, Richard's farewell interview with his queen, the description of Richard's and Bolingbroke's entry into

London, and the visit of the groom to the deposed king at Pomfret. These additions greatly enhance the dramatic merits of the play, and do much to arouse compassion for the lonely fate of the fallen king.

## V. GENERAL REMARKS

In *Richard II* Shakespeare made several modifications in the methods he had adopted in his earlier historical plays. He did not make any use whatsoever of prose, nor did he introduce any humorous scenes. Chronicle-plays written by Shakespeare and other Elizabethans had hitherto for the most part been rather ill-constructed plays, dealing with the events of the whole reign of whatever monarch was the play's chief figure; in *Richard II* Shakespeare concentrated on the last two years of Richard's reign and on the catastrophe which cost him his throne and his life. The effect of this concentration is to make *Richard II* resemble a tragedy rather than an historical play; it may, indeed, be regarded as history shaping itself towards tragedy. Another notable feature of *Richard II* is the lyrical nature of its blank-verse. In this respect it resembles two plays which were written at more or less the same time, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* and *Romeo and Juliet*. *Richard II*, therefore, in many respects marks a notable advance on the earlier chronicle-history plays. The three parts of *Henry VI* gave, on the whole, a faithful picture of their period, but were not good plays; *Richard III* was an admirable play, but gained some of its dramatic vividness by falsifying history; *Richard II* is both good history and good drama.

The character of King Richard II is Shakespeare's first attempt at an elaborate psychological study. It is an extremely subtle and an extremely clever piece of work. Richard was a man of a highly developed artistic temperament, who could be charming to his wife and

to his intimate friends, but who was quite incapable of governing England in turbulent times. He was an obvious misfit, a square peg in a round hole. He might have won momentary fame as a minor poet or an artist; he had not, as some have said, the makings of a great poet, though his epitaph described him as "as wise as Homer". (As Dr. Johnson said, "The writer of an epitaph should not be considered as saying nothing but what is strictly true. In lapidary inscriptions a man is not upon oath.") This unpractical, ineffectual man found himself opposed by his cousin Bolingbroke, a hard, efficient man, who knew exactly what he wanted and how to set about getting it. The struggle could have but one end; Richard was bound to lose his throne, and Bolingbroke was the man needed by the times. Richard loses much of our pity because he is so weak in character; we cannot help feeling contempt for him. He is a tragic figure only because his fall from prosperity to adversity is so great. His speeches express his self-commiseration in exquisite poetry, and we should be loath to lose them; but Shakespeare discovered later that in the great crises of men's lives, a gesture, a monosyllable, a look are far more probable than any long speech. Ten years later, Shakespeare would have handled this theme in quite another way.

Beside the two outstanding figures of Richard and Henry, the other characters of the play are of little importance and are drawn in outline rather than in detail. Gaunt and York are well-drawn minor figures, resembling each other as brothers often do, but quite distinctly differentiated. The surly Aumerle and the other turbulent peers do not seem to have aroused Shakespeare's interest to any great extent, and they are not much more than a living background for the two great figures of the rival cousins.

Shakespeare has made one or two interesting deviations from history, of a kind which almost always must be made for the sake of dramatic effect. For instance,

John of Gaunt, who was a failure in war and in diplomacy alike, and who was detested by the majority of his fellow-countrymen, is represented as a wise and enlightened patriot and the mouthpiece of England. He is also represented as a man in extreme old age; as a matter of fact he died just before he attained the age of fifty-nine. The Queen's age, too, is not historically correct; when the play opened she was a child of ten.

In denying himself scenes of humorous relief Shakespeare adopted a policy which he never tried again. It is interesting to compare the humble characters in this play, the gardeners in Act III, Scene 4, and the groom in Act V, Scene 5, with similar characters in later plays, for example, with the gravediggers in *Hamlet*. The gardeners speak in a fashion in which no gardener ever spoke, except upon the stage; while the gravediggers are in every sense of the word of the earth, earthy, and are a most faithful portrait of Elizabethan labourers.

The events represented in the play took place between 28th April, 1398, and February or March, 1400.

## QUESTIONS

1. What were Richard's defects as a king?
2. Had Richard great personal charm?
3. Does Richard's conduct in misfortune (*a*) move your pity, (*b*) command your respect?
4. Why did Shakespeare represent Gaunt as (*a*) extremely old, (*b*) a wise patriot?
5. At the close of the opening scene of the play are you inclined to believe that justice is on Mowbray's side or on Bolingbroke's?
6. What impression have you formed of the character of Aumerle?
7. Had Bolingbroke designs on the crown when he landed at Ravenspurgh, or did he merely come to claim his dukedom?
8. Contrast Bolingbroke's character with that of Richard.
9. What does the play tell us about Prince Henry (afterwards Henry V)?
10. How would you make up for the part of Richard? Would you alter your make-up as the play progresses, and if so, when, how, and why?
11. Describe an Elizabethan theatre.
12. Give a short account of the part played by the Duke of York in the play.
13. How do the gardeners compare their garden and the State?

14. With what purpose is the parting scene between Richard and his Queen introduced?

15. In view of York's own chequered career, can his reaction to his son's plot be excused?

16. Why does Shakespeare introduce the incident of the groom?

17. Who or what were: Golgotha; Phaethon; the Antipodes; Barkloughly; Pomfret; Ravenspurgh?

18. Explain: Rug-headed kerns; sue his livery; beadsmen; Jack o' the clock; perspectives; double-fatal yew.

19. Why is *Richard II* seldom acted?

20. How does *Richard II* reflect the patriotism of Elizabethan England?

21. How far does Richard's power of imagination contribute to his sufferings?

22. Why is Richard II probably the least satisfactory of Shakespeare's tragic heroes?

23. Discuss the conventions of chivalry illustrated in this play.

24. In what ways does Shakespeare's handling of verse in this play show that it was one of his earlier plays?

25. Select any turns of phrase that seem particularly Shakespearean, and say why you think so.

26. Who said:

(a) Welcome, my son: who are the violets now  
That strew the green lap of the new come spring?

(b) The sly slow hours shall not determinate  
The dateless limit of thy dear exile.

(c) O, who can hold a fire in his hand  
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?

- (d) The pale-faced moon looks bloody on the earth  
And lean-look'd prophets whisper fearful change.
- (e) Great Duke of Lancaster, I come to thee  
From plume-pluck'd Richard.
- (f) "I would thou wert the man  
That would divorce this terror from my heart."
- (g) That which in mean men we intitle patience  
Is pale cold cowardice in noble breasts.

